

R: L: Pet:

A D V I C E
TO THE
R E A D E R S
O F T H E
Common Prayer,
And to the
P E O P L E
Attending the same.

With a P R E F A C E concerning
D I V I N E W O R S H I P.

Humbly offered to Consideration,
for promoting the greater Decency and So-
lemnity in performing the Offices of Gods
P U B L I C K W O R S H I P, Admi-
nistred according to the Order Esta-
blished by Law amongst us.

By a well-meaning (though unlearned) Layick of
the C H U R C H of E N G L A N D.
T. S.

The Second Edition much enlarged.

L O N D O N, Printed for Sam. Crouch at the corner
of Popes head Alley next Corn-hill. 1683.

A. W. H. F.

NOTICE

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TO THE
READER.

THere is no Christian that prays in the words which his Lord hath taught him, but doth implicitly profess his desire that these Papers may be read and considered: For the first thing he there prays for, is the hallowing Gods Name; which is, That God will give his Grace to us, and all people, that we may worship him as we ought to do, as our Catechism hath taught us. Now the design of this Book being onely to give assistance to the worshipping God as we ought, he that desires the doing of that, must also be considering of this. For how meanly soever the thing be done, it cannot but occasion some thoughts in mens minds, and some discourse in company upon this Subject; whereby it is very probable, many things which in the ordinary performance have been amiss, may be observed and amended, which would not have
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otherwise been thought on; and men may be excited to consider what is fit to be done, that this Service may be most decently and solemnly performed. - And if it do but this, I have my end. I do not impose my Dictates on any, but offer things to Consideration with all humility; acknowledging, that both my want of Learning, Time, Health, and due composition, make me unfit to write for publick view: but my fervent desire to see things ordered in the best manner in this Service, which I have found so comfortable to my self, and desire may be more esteemed and frequented by others, hath perswaded this Essay; which I hope will offend none. If any should blame my boldness in meddling with those of the Ministry, my excuse must be, in the observation of an Ingenious Gentleman; That even the Lamps of the Sanctuary may need Snuffers to make them burn the clearer. I know he saith, they ought to be of Gold; and I wish mine were better Metal: But I hope the purity of my Intention, will make amends for the meanness of my Style and Expression, and procure a kind acceptance with that Sacred Tribe.

Upon occasion of this Second Edition, I must add this to the Reader; That I was forced in
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the first to cut off much of what I designed, that so I might accommodate the Book to what the Bookseller would venture to print : but he, now grown more bold by the good success of his first undertaking, gives me liberty to prosecute my first intentions ; wherefore I here make some small enlargements ; and I have done it with good intentions, for the exciting a serious Devotion in these holy Exercises of Gods Worship, which by the prevalency of false Opinions, and vicious Practices, is greatly decayed ; and I have done it with full persuasion of mind, but without contempt of any that are otherwise affected. I pity all that will not make a thorough tryal of the felicity of a Holy life, and of the practice of holiness according to the example of the ancientest and purest times, and as it is purged from all Superstition and Fanaticism, (and such, I think is that I recommend.) And I am the more moved to this compassion, by the experience I have of the good success of this practice in my self. I was bred to the exercise of Piety in another way, and endeavoured to be devout therein, as my Conscience told me I ought. I conversed with the wisest and best I lived with, and had some interests among them to perswade me to a continuance in that Way ; but when it pleased God to bring in

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another Order, I thought it my duty to consider well, before I sat down in a fixed disobedience. I thought I could not express the honour I owed to my Superiours, if I should refuse to consider what was said for Obedience to their Laws; nor yet the love I should have for communion with all Christians, & especially those to whom I was united by manifold obligations, if I should forsake it on scruples easily resolved; or for the bare liking of some other Mode of Worship, as better than that they used. And upon an impartial consideration of what I have heard & read, (having never balked any Argument that I met with against the lawfulness of Lay-Nonconformity;) I am now satisfied that it is my duty to obey the publick Order: and having endeavoured to do it with the Devotion I ought, I have found it no way inferiour (to speak the least) to what I was formerly used to, as to the uses and benefits of publick Worship, & especially to the exercise and entertainment of a Heavenly mind. This experience moved the importunity used to Ministers and People in this Book, that they which Conform might do it so devoutly, as might be to the comfort of themselves, and attracting others to our Communion. And I have insinuated some Arguments to enforce the same, as so brief

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brief a Discourse would permit; which, with the former, I recommend unto Gods Blessing, and a candid interpretation; being resolved to make no more Additions thereunto, although it should have the good hap to be printed again. I hope they will not be angry with me, that have bought any of the first Edition, because I believe most of them are such, as six pence will not much concern; and it will be a good work for them (if they have a mind to this Book) to give the former where they find any guilty of the faults therein noted; and in this they will very much gratifie the Author of the Book, who desires nothing more in this world, than to see the excellent Order of our Church observed with that care and consideration (as well as with true Devotion) that it may have its true beauty in the eyes of all good men, and may also have a mighty efficacy to their Spiritual joy and consolation in this holy and heavenly Communion, and to the reformation and sanctification of their minds and lives.

A
P R E F A C E

Concerning Divine Worship.

THe Worship of God is a thing much talked of (and that with great reverence) by many who have not (as I think) such apprehensions of it as they ought. And on the other hand, of some it is as much slighted, as if there were something of Fanaticism in all pretences to Devotion. My design therefore in this Preface shall be, to beget right thoughts about it, and a due esteem thereof; as I have in what follows endeavoured to direct a right behaviour therein.

If men would consider the thing, it would not be difficult to understand what the true Notion of Divine Worship is. Every man knows what it is to give Worship in the common sence of that word, (viz.) That it is to signifie our Respects to persons above us, by reverent actions suited unto their dignity: And so it must principally signifie, when it is applied

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applied unto God , The expreffion of the
greatest dread and reverence towards his
Glorious and Tremendous Deity , by the
most humble postures of Adoration. *This*
hath been the sense of all Mankind concerning
this matter , and *this is the sense of the holy*
Scriptures ; and *this all the Christian-world*
agreed in , until the corruptions and cruelties
of the Church of Rome , made those that
justly opposed her in many things , to forsake
others, without any other reason, but the ha-
tred of being like to her, who had been so cruel
towards them. And among these, I reckon
this to be the chief ; That they not only left
off the daily Offices of Gods publick Worship,
but also that ancient Order for the perfor-
mance thereof on the Lords day , which was
most accommodate unto the conjunction of these
actions of Devotion and Adoration ; by which
means , bowing the Head, and Body, and
Knees, &c. which have in them the principal
sense of that word Worship , have become
almost quite out of use among them.

I cannot imagine for my own part, any other
reason why these solemn actions should become
so wholly disused ; for I cannot believe that
any who are acquainted with what is written
of the former or present Customs of the world,
can be ignorant what the usage thereof hath

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ever been, and still is, in worshipping whatever they called God: nor did I ever hear it proved, that their common sense did herein deceive them. & It seems to me also, that it is impossible for any that read the Scripture, to be ignorant that when it speaks of any person or assembly that they Worshipped the Lord, it means principally, they bowed their Heads before him in acknowledgment of his Deity, or in a sense of Gratitude for his mercies; nor that these two words, Bowed and Worshipped, are almost every-where in Scripture joyned together. And those that have read Ecclesiastical Histories, or conversed with any of other Churches (even those that never were of the Popish Communion) will find, that it is not the Papists onely among Christians, that abound in these solemn acts of Adoration; but that they ever were, and still are used by all Christians (and by some as much, if not more than by them) except only those whom I speak of, who have forsaken them on the account aforesaid.

Certainly there is some reason upon which this common consent is grounded, and for which this expression hath ever been made, by good men, of the Worship and Honour they desire to give to Almighty God; and hath ever been accepted and approved of him; and for the same reason it ought not to be forsaken and
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disused of us. And indeed, the very general custom and usage of the World, and of the Church, hath so much of reason in it self, that it should be evidently proved there is positive sin, or great inconvenience in the things recommended thereby, before we venture to contradict or oppose them. We are commanded to give no offence to the Jew, nor Greek, nor Church of God: whereas it seems to me, by forsaking these solemn acts of Adoration we offend them all. And I verily believe, nothing more perswades the Papists of the goodness of their own Religion, and makes them think ill of ours, than observing the decency of these solemn actions so frequently used in their publick Service; and that it scarce looks like the Worship of God, where they are wholly omitted: as they are in some Protestant Churches; and in all Nonconformists Meetings; and too much in our Parochial Assemblies also.

But it is not onely the avoiding offence that should recommend these solemn actions, (and especially that of Bowing) but many great reasons. 1. There is nothing more effectual to impress on the mind a sense of Gods Presence, than this action of Bowing before him. It is impossible a man can use such an Action, but he must think there is some one present to whom it is performed; and where

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men have not a true belief of Gods presence, and are conscious unto themselves of that defect, it will seem so unreasonable and foolish to perform such acts of Adoration, that they will be hardly perswaded thereunto. And for this reason, when the world became so carnaliz'd by indulging their brutish part, that they could scarce have any apprehension of invisible things but by the help of something that was the Object of their Senses, they invented Images to represent the invisible Powers they worshipped; and fancied that by their Incantations and Charms, their Gods were drawn to inhabit those Images; by which means they found they were helped in performing those acts of Adoration to them. But the only living and true God hath utterly forbidden any such representations of himself, as being a dishonour to the infinite Glory and Spirituality of his Nature; but yet requires external Worship from us, in acknowledgment that he is everywhere present, but especially in the Assemblies that meet to do him honour and service; and that he, and he onely, is to be feared, and had in reverence of all that are about him: and if we would perform this act of Adoration as we ought, we should find great help thereby, against the weakness of our Faith, and the dulness of our Spiritual sense;

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sense; and it would beget in us such an habitual apprehension of Gods Spiritual and invisible presence, that it would be as a new nature or principle of spiritual and holy life in all other things: I say, if we perform it as we ought; because I would have none think that I impute a Magical force to this action, as if all that do it, on what account soever, should become inspired with such an habitual sense of God and his universal presence. For I know, that where this is in repute, men may be very observant thereof for carnal ends; and be inwardly Atheistical, and outwardly profane still: but if it be done with a design to signifie our belief of Gods presence, and our awfull sense of his infinite Glory and Greatness, it hath tendency to work a habit of spiritual sensibility in this matter, and by the efficacie of the same, we shall be continually kept in the fear of offending God, and excited to all holy and vertuous actions that are pleasing to him: which I think is a very weighty matter.

Besides, it prepares and disposes our minds to the performance of all the Offices of Divine Worship, whereby we explicate the signification of such acts of Adoration: and therefore it hath been used to be done at our first coming into the Church,

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that we may remember what we are chiefly to intend in all we do there, viz. the Worship and Honour of Almighty God. The want of this consideration, is a cause of great mischiefs in the Church : Men have learnt to think, that all the Ministries of Religion are intended to work on their Affections and Passions, and to gratifie a Religious Fancy ; and so they judge they are best ordered, when they serve most effectually to that end : and upon this account it is, that they condemn the Common Prayer as a dead Form, and cry up the Extempore way, as the only acceptable mode of serving God. And while they thus judge, they are subject to be drawn into Schism and Error by every subtile Seducer that can handle the instrument of his Tongue well, and affect their minds with some devout Passions. For so long as they think That way of Religion best which most affects them, (novelty having a great force in that matter ; and men that design to serve their Interests by making Disciples, being apt to bend their minds most strenuously to study to speak to mens passions) men can never be fix'd in any way of Religion. But now if they were once perswaded that those publick Administrations were best, which serve most fitly to the Worship and Adoration of the Deity, and are most advantageous

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vantageous for the conjunction of these solemn actions which I here speak of; it would be hard for them to find any better than ours among those which separate from us.

For the better understanding the beginning of the foregoing Paragraph, wherein I say, that in the Offices of Divine Worship we explain the signification of the acts of Adoration, I must observe, 1. That, as the Worship we perform to God, by humbly bowing down in our approach to his glorious Majesty, doth declare our obligation unto all we perform in the following Offices; so those Offices do contain the explication of the Worship we thereby give to the Almighty. For since we declare by that action, that we worship him as the only true God, we oblige our selves to perform that service which Deity makes his due: and this we do, when we give him thanks for the great benefits we have received at his hands, and set forth his most worthy praise; when we attend diligently to his holy Word, and seek at his hands things requisite and necessary for Body and Soul: for by these things we do acknowledge him to be the Fountain of our Being, and of all the benefits whereof we are partakers, and to be the free and gracious donor thereof; and that he is most worthy of all the Praise and Glory that
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we can give him, at by reason thereof, so also because of the infinite perfections of his Nature, and his mighty and wonderful works which we behold: That he is infinite Wisdom and Truth, and to be believed in all that he reveals to us: That he is our only Supreme Law-giver, and to be obeyed in all that he commands us: That he is our Sovereign Lord, and our weal or woe doth wholly depend on his Favour or Displeasure; and that no arts or labours of our own can secure us against misery, or instate us in true felicity, whether it be internal or external, present or future, but that our whole dependance is on his favour and blessing. And all this, and much more, is contained in our acknowledging him to be God; which we do, by bowing down before him in the place of his Publick Worship.

2. Since the chief end of our publick Service is the most explicite worshipping God, by acknowledging those things which Deity doth imply; It is very meet that we joyn this act of Adoration with our Prayers and Praises, in fit places; as, at the mention of Gods glorious Titles and Attributes in the beginnings of the Collects; and when we implore his gracious acceptance through the merits of our blessed Saviour, in the conclusion thereof:
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and there are also many places in the Te Deum, and in the other Hymns and Psalms, where this action is very fit, both to express our sense of Gods presence, our reverence towards him, our belief that he sees us, and that he hears all we speak to him; and also to keep our Devotion in life and strength, and to assist it in each other. I find in many places of Scripture, where the manner of the solemn approaches of the people unto God is described, that they did bow their heads and worship, in conjunction with their Praises and Prayers: And it seems to me, that there is such a natural decency in the thing, that all unprejudiced persons must approve it. Sure I am, that the devout behaviour of such as I have known to be truly pious men in this kind, hath had a great influence on me; and I may think it will have the like on others.

3. That it seems to me, that the intention of mind which is required to the speaking in any good Sense and Method in the Extempore-way of Prayer, is a great hindrance to the due use of such acts of Worship in the speaker; and the necessary attention to what is spoken, and the inward discourse of Reason, whether it be fit for us to joyn with the Minister therein, is as great hindrance to such Devotion in the hearers.

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4. That the Brief and Comprehensive Prayers into which the general Office of Prayer in our Way is divided, seems much better in this respect, than if the several matters whereof they consist were composed into one long continued Prayer.

5. That it would be very convenient that every one would keep to their own Parish-Church, where they might have conveniences to perform both this and other Expressions of Devotion, better than they can in a Crowd; into which many throng, for lesser benefits than they might have by a devout performance of these holy Offices.

This then I conceive (according to what I have said before) to be the Worship of God: When men knowing and considering that there is one eternal infinite Being, of most glorious and tremendous Majesty, and of incomprehensible Goodness, Wisdom, and Power, that is present in all places; who, having made us with such powers and faculties as fit us for his Worship and Service, and enriched us with such benefits as give us greatest obligations thereunto, doth expect that we perform the same to the greatest advantage of his Glory and Honour. I say, when we knowing this, go unto the place of Gods Publick Worship, and there do by actions worship God,
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bowing our Heads and Knees before him, and also by words; declaring our belief of his Being, Presence, Perfections, and wonderful Works, and our thankfulness for his infinite Mercies, and joy and delight in his Service: when we humbly and seriously attend to the solemn reading of his divine Truth, the Histories of his mighty Works, to his Promises and Threatnings whereby he hath enforced his Laws, to the Prophecies and miraculous Gifts whereby he hath assured us the Doctrine is from himself, though by ministry of men; and such-like things of great concernment to the glory of God, as well as our good, which we hear out of the holy Scriptures: As also, when we make our Supplications and Prayers before him as our supream Lord and Governour, and thereby acknowledge his universal Presence and Providence extending to all times, places, and persons, with all their circumstances, even in the minutest things, and withal, over-ruling the greatest: And when in all these we intermix due acts of Adoration, as continually intent on the consideration of Gods Presence, and waiting for occasions, in the Offices of Praise, Hearing, and Prayers, to adore his divine Majesty internally and externally, and to express our devout affections by such actions as bowing and lifting up our
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Eyes and Hands to Heaven, &c. and also kneeling and standing as it is most fitly ordered by the Church : And when every one at the conclusion of the Service using some short Ejaculation to beg Gods pardon for what defects we have been guilty of, and his acceptance of our sincere desire to honour him, humbly bowing before him at our leaving the Church; this I conceive to have as much Conformity to what all men (that consider their natural apprehensions of things) will judge most like to that which is the plain sense of Worshipping God.

'Tis some wonder to me, that many who seem to have a great zeal for the Worship of God, and make every thing they do about Religion part thereof (as the Church-Covenant, (which they add to that of Baptism) and the suffrage of the People in the matter of the Ordination of Ministers, &c.) should be so inobservant of that Worship which Heathens have known by the light of Nature to be due to God; and which all that ever worshipped a God (true or false) have used. Certainly the Law of Nature is Gods most primitive Law, and cannot be altered while things remain the same; and all Divine Institutions in the matter of Worship, do but supply the defects of that Law; and were
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Modes of Worship added (for special reasons) to that which Nature taught, but no way exclusive thereof, or contrary thereunto; and the Sacraments of the New Testament are instituted on the same account. Besides, I have observed in the Writings of the Nonconformists, an acknowledgment of the duty of natural Worship, and of the use of such natural actions whereof it consists; but always this of Bowing (which is the chief) is left out of the Catalogue, and some hard names, such as Cringing Gesticulation, &c. put upon it, to disgrace it; of which I never could find any reason, but their enmity to our Church, and their dislike of it in their own Way. 'Tis true, in one I find this, That Custom doth limit and determine Natures Laws; upon which account, Prostration, and wearing Sack-cloth, and rending Garments, are now disused. And Bowing (since it is still left out) seems to be put among the number of those natural actions determined by Custom. But what Custom is this? Surely not the Custom of the Community of Mankind, nor of the Church of Christ, but of some that have almost banished all other expressions of Devotion, but such which may be as proper to the hearing any Tragical story, as to the Worship of God. But though Nature only teach-

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eth the use of such behaviour in worshipping God as is most expressive of our Reverence towards him, and Custom may make some variation of those expressions; yet this act of Bowing seems so naturally fit to express reverence, and so decent, that it hath become universally Customary, and is never like to be determined by contrary Custom, or disparaged by hard Names, except amongst such as themselves.

I know that it is also said, that the Act of Parliament forbids the use of any other Ceremonies than what are mentioned in the Rubrick; and that this being not mentioned, it would be an act of disobedience to use it. To which I answer, That the natural expressions of Worship and Reverence to Almighty God cannot be there meant: for then, lifting up the Hands and Eyes to Heaven, may be thought forbidden as well as this; which I think none will affirm: But as God himself hath not instituted any thing positively, (no not in the time of the Law, when he was (as it were) the Temporal Monarch of the Jews) about his Natural Worship, (such as was performed in their Synagogues) so our Governours have not thought fit to institute any thing in this Case, but leave it to be done by every one as his Devotion moves him; but
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It is also said by some, that it may make the Service of God seem ludicrous , by being done too much ; and every one hath not discretion to do it as he ought , and will be apt to exceed ; that the Papists are grown to such an extream in this action of Bowing , and such Gesticulations about it, that their Service is as ridiculous to Protestants, &c. To which I answer : As to the Papists, I can be no judge in that matter, because I never saw the full Order of their Service ; but I know that many esteem ill of things they are not used to, without just cause : the use of Musick and artificial Singing, of Responses and Alternate Readings in Divine Service, seem ridiculous to some that have been educated in another Way. Besides, what the Papists are thought to exceed in , is matter of Institution ; the time and place of their Bowing, Crossing, &c. being directed by their Rubrick (as I have read) but that which I speak of, is a matter of liberty, in which I never saw or heard that there was excess. That people left at liberty should be too much in bowing their Heads or Knees in adoration of him they worship, in lifting up their Hands and Eyes to Heaven, in expression of their fervent affection

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tion in Prayer, &c. seems to me no way to be feared. 'Tis like some few (especially of the younger sort) that are much affected by observing the decency of this in some Ministers that practise it; being such, as by the holiness of their Life, and excellency of their Doctrine, have obtained a great reverence with them; I say, they may seem (and I think but seem) too zealous in this matter: but as the generality are far enough from that fault, and more like to be ashamed to do what their Consciences tell them is very decent, (especially when done by grave men) than to exceed therein; so I think the fear of it should deter no man from recommending a due and decent performance, which is all this Paper aims at. But supposing this to be true, that men do, or may thus exceed, it seems an ill way of arguing, That because a thing may be over-done, therefore it should not be done at all. Some find fault with Extempore Prayers, that they are too long; and others, with ours in the Common Prayer, that they are too short: Should any man now say, 'Tis best then to have no Prayers at all? yet 'tis as much reason in this case as the other. Men will never be of one mind in the measure of these things, while they are of different affection; the Formal will condemn the Devout

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vout of Excess, as they do them of Defect: but when Reason is consulted, all will agree that something of this kind is decent; and therefore methinks, after there hath been among us so long a total omission of this way of expressing Devotion, none should blame my Essay to recommend it. Though I have said thus much in favour of Bowing, which our Church leaves to every ones liberty, yet I would not be thought so confident in my assertions herein, as to condemn all that do not bold or practise as I do: but I humbly offer this, as other things, to the consideration of the Wise, being willing to reform any thing in my thoughts or actions that I shall be convinced to be amiss. And do believe that those Conformists, who use not this action, have better reason for it than I am aware of; or else on farther consideration, may do as most Churches in the world, and most of their Brethren have given them example.

I shall farther observe, as to this matter of Gods Worship, That God expects such Worship from us, as is futable to the Revelations he hath made of himself. It was cause of his great displeasure against the Gentile world, that when they knew him to be God, they did not worship him as God: when his eternal Power and
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vout of Excess, as they do them of Defect: but when Reason is consulted, all will agree that something of this kind is decent; and therefore methinks, after there hath been among us so long a total omission of this way of expressing Devotion, none should blame my Essay to recommend it. Though I have said thus much in favour of Bowing, which our Church leaves to every ones liberty, yet I would not be thought so confident in my assertions herein, as to condemn all that do not bow or practise as I do: but I humbly offer this, as other things, to the consideration of the Wise, being willing to reform any thing in my thoughts or actions that I shall be convinced to be amiss. And do believe that those Conformists, who use not this action, have better reason for it than I am aware of; or else on farther consideration, may do as most Churches in the world, and most of their Brethren have given them example.

I shall farther observe, as to this matter of Gods Worship, That God expects such Worship from us, as is futable to the Revelations he hath made of himself. It was cause of his great displeasure against the Gentile world, that when they knew him to be God, they did not worship him as God: when his eternal Power and
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Godhead (*though invisible in it self*) was made evident by the works of his Creation which they had continually before their eyes, whereby they might have learnt to worship him as an infinite incorruptible Spirit, yet they would worship him under the resemblances of Corruptible things; which was a dishonour to the Eternity and Omnipotency of his Divine Nature.

But now our blessed Saviour hath farther revealed the incomprehensible Deity, as subsisting in a Trinity of persons in the Unity of his Essence, and as manifested in our Flesh, in the second Person of that blessed Trinity: which revelation of God requires something peculiar in the matter of Divine Worship from us Christians. It hath been received as a matter of Faith by the Catholick Church, That the Trinity in Unity and the Unity in Trinity is to be worshipped; and that our blessed Saviour, as God and man, is to be honoured as we honour the Father. Now it seems to me, that there is such an excellent Order in our Liturgy for the performance of the Worship of God and our blessed Saviour according to these Evangelical Revelations, that 'tis scarce to be equalled in any other Way, especially that which is set up in competition with it. And I doubt not, all those
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that will impartially consider the Responses, the Te Deum, the Gloria Patri, (which we so frequently use, because it is suitable to this Gospel-Worship, (of which yet some complain there is great defect in our Liturgy) as also the Creed, the Letany, and the Communion-Service, and how God is therein honoured as Three persons, and yet but one God; and our Saviour invocated and acknowledged as God-man advanced to the highest dignity at the right hand of God; I say, he that considers this, I hope, will think as I do. I know prejudice binders men from observing what is excellent in any thing, but especially in such things they are not used to: but as I suppose none will deny God is thus to be worshipped; so, where men are not prejudiced, I verily believe they will think, that in no Way they can do it better.

There is something also to be inferred, as to this matter of Gods Worship, from the plentiful effusion of the Spirit in Gospel-times, and our Fellowship and Communion in that Spirit. There are some Phrases in the New Testament, which, I think, have been perverted to a wrong sence, such as Praying in the Holy Ghost, Worshipping God in the Spirit, and in Spirit and Truth: which I think may better be referred to the worshipping God

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as revealed by the Gospel (which is called the ministration of the Spirit) in the respect forementioned; or else to our worshipping God in Faith and Fervency, in Unity and Unanimity, without distinction of Jew and Gentile; in spirituality, without legal Types and Figures, and carnal Ordinances; in the virtue of Christs Merits, which was the truth of all the bloody Sacrifices of atonement for acceptance with God in the legal Worship; and this, according to the revelations whereof the Spirit of Christ is Author, and by whose Gifts and Powers they were confirmed: I say, better reserved to these things, than to praying without study, or any prepared Form, onely by help of the Spirit.

It seems to me, that if these Expressions had any relation to praying by any extraordinary and supernatural assistance of Gods Spirit, (as was their praying in Languages they had never learnt, or in Expressions that were above any attainments they could be supposed to have by ordinary means) it must be applyable onely unto that time. For, however an Opinion hath been insinuated of late, of a miraculous and supernatural assistance for the performance of that duty, which hath given confidence to many (who are naturally unable for the same) to venture on it, and that even
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in publick Administration, to the great dishonour of Religion, and just offence of all wise men: yet I think none will dare to affirm, that any Christian or Minister hath any promise from God of such assistance of the Spirit, as may make it to be truly said, that he prays in the Spirit, in the sense above-mentioned. But now, as I first interpreted it of praying as the Revelations of the Spirit of Christ in the Gospel requires, it is applicable to all times and persons: and this I think to be done (as in the forementioned respect of worshipping the Trinity in Unity, and our Lord and Saviour as God-man, so also) when our Prayers are ordered for the greatest advantage of Faith and fervency, and of the Union and Communion of all Saints; and so I think ours are.

For in the first place, our Faith is helped, by the assurance that we ask such things as are pleasing to God; and secondly, by the frequent mention of the merits of Christ: When we pray in the words which our Lord and Saviour hath taught us, and use such Forms as have been composed by men famous in the Church, and approved by multitudes of Christians, and that for many Ages: when our Prayers are ordered with great advice of those that are most Learned among our selves,

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(being also such as are orderly called to direct the publick ministrations in Sacred things) and when they are approved by all the Christians united under one Civil Government, (which approbation is declared by their Representatives in Parliament, with whose advice they are by Law established) and when we may our selves consider and weigh the same before we use them, having them in our Books to read at any time; certainly we may on all these accounts be more assured that we pray for such things as we ought, than when we joyn in a Prayer we never heard before, and such as is the sudden conception of a private Minister, (as the use is with those that are against our Way.) Thirdly, the frequent mention of the Merits of our Saviour at the conclusion of our brief Collects, is more helpful to our Belief that we shall find acceptance for Christs sake, than when it is onely once at the end of a long continued Prayer, if my own experience and that of wiser men do not deceive me.

And for fervency, we have great help also, having nothing to do but to apply our minds to earnestness in praising God and praying to him; no need of attending to hear what is spoken, that we may judge whether it be fit for us to joyn in or not: and when we know
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the Prayers beforehand, we can joyn with the Minister and Congregation, though we hear not every word is read. And the briefness of the Prayers, being composed of such weighty and comprehensive Expressions, helps more to true fervency than long Prayers, though the novelty and variety may more work on mens Fancies.

3. *We have far more of the Fellowship and Communion of the Spirit in our Way, than in that which is set up against it. First, we agree with the Saints of all Ages in this, That the publick Worship of God is to be administred by a prepared Form, and not by the present conceptions of the Administrator: For I cannot understand that either the Jewish Church or the Christian did ever administer their publick Worship in any other way (except what those persons did who were Divinely inspired, as many were among the Jews, and in the first ages of the Church, who therefore were said to prophecy when they uttered such excellent Psalms or Prayers Extempore:) of which this is a sufficient demonstration to me, That in the Jewish Synagogues all things at this day are administred by Forms, and in all the Christian-Churches (that have not been accounted Enthusiastical) the same Way was ever observed; or at least,*

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none can deny that it now is so in all the Christian World, except those Congregations that are united in some odd opinion, and separate from the body of Christians; the onely considerable Body of these that ever admitted the other Way of administration, being the Scots formerly, and the English in the late Distractions: but on many accounts that admission cannot be esteemed an orderly Settlement, or excuse them from Schism, though it were by the prevailing party. Now since it hath scarce ever been known, that in matters Sacred, and of long Custom, great alterations have been made, but with great Oppositions and Contentions; I conclude that if in the beginning of the Jewish Worship in their Synagogues, or of the Christian Worship in the publick Assemblies, Prayers had been ordinarily used to be made in the Extempore way (except by inspired persons, as before) that Way could not have been altered, so universally as it was, to the use of Forms, and yet we have no notice of the same, either in History or by Tradition. But not onely in that we use a Form, but we use such Forms wherein we have the most Communion with other Christians that is possible in the very words we speak; we use the Psalms of David, which as they have ever been a part of the Publick Worship of Jews,

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so also of Christians: the Te Deum hath been used very anciently, and received of abundance of Churches into their publick Liturgy; so the Creeds, and the Collects before the Epistles and Gospels; and the General Confession and Absolution; the Gloria Patri; and most parts of our Service, which is made up of the most approved and generally-received Forms of Prayer that could be found, with accommodation to the present time.

3. In the use of the Common-Prayer, we have Communion most fully with the Christians to whom we are united under one Government, which we call the Church of England; and with all that Congregation that we presently joyn within publick Worship: whereas in the other Way we have no certain Communion but onely with the Minister, because we are not sure that any one in the Congregation approves of all he says, nor it may be can we neither; and it is possible the Minister himself may speak that, for want of premeditation, which he on second thoughts may not approve himself. So that there cannot be so full Communion of the Spirit in that Way as in ours.

These things I have thought fit to hint, to beget a good opinion in the minds of men, of our established Order for the publick Worship of God. But I would not be thought to de-

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*blame any that have a true love to God, and desire to honour and glorifie him in such a way of Worship as they think most acceptable to him; what mistakes soever misinformation and prejudices of Education and Conuerses may subiect them unto. And I hope those that differ from me, will not reproach my fervent desire to promote Piety in the Way I best approve, and that which I am many ways obliged to chuse before any other. And if what I have written would perswade them to make a honest trial, (not by standing at gaze to see what we do, or sitting by as unconcerned in the Worship we offer by the Common-prayer, while they only wait for the Preacher they desire to hear, but) by joyning heartily with us, according to the advice of this Paper; I do not doubt but they would soon leave wondering at my fervency in this Way. But if some should through misguided Zeal, or for the interests of their Party; fall foul on me for commending what they seek by all means to deprave, I am content to suffer as my Saviour did, while the Reproaches of those that reproach God (in condemning what by the Laws of Nature, and Examples in Scripture, he approves) fall upon me. And if those, that approve this Way of Worship, be made hereby the more fervent and devout in attending there-
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upon, I shall rejoyce in my labours and sufferings for their sakes. And I hope they will be so, when they consider, that in this Way, Devotion is not subject to be abused by the subtilty of ill men, as it hath been by such on both sides that differ from us: That here is no discouragement given to the weak and bashful, by exemplifying a way of Devotion that is above their reach; nor any temptation to the bold and self-conceited to aspire, to their own shame, and the disturbance of the Church: That therein nothing but principles of Truth, that tend to Piety, Charity, Obedience to Superiours, Meekness, Moderation, and Peaceableness among our selves, are possible to be insinuated into our minds: That hereby we shall be greatly assisted in holy Meditations, (while our minds will be stored with abundance of excellent matter for the same), and in educating our Children religiously, in keeping our Families in unity and order, and performing the Worship belonging to the same; and many other great benefits that we shall experience in a devout attendance on the daily Service of God in publick appointed by this Church; by which means they will also be more confirmed in their love hereunto, and become examples to others, who will be more effectually drawn to their duty, by observing

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the practice of this Way of Piety, than by disputations about it. And it seems to me, that nothing is more like to preserve this Church against the designs of its Enemies on both hands, than such fervency of true Devotion in those that profess themselves the Children thereof: The effecting of which is the design of the ensuing Advice both to Readers and People.

While this Sheet was Printing, I was told by a friend, that he heard the Learned Dr. Beveridge (in a Sermon on *Titus* 2. 12. *March* 26.) declare, That the import of the word *Worship*, was expressing Honour and Respect by bowing the Head and Shoulders; and that this action, as it had anciently been used in sacred Offices to signify our adoration of Almighty God, so it is most fit and decent in the exercises of Religion now. I was much pleased that the judgment of so excellent a person, publicly declared, just at the coming out of this Book, (which I am sure he had not the least knowledge or intimation of) gave countenance to my Undertaking in this Preface.

Since that, I hearing the said Doctor read Prayers at one of the Lent-Sermons
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at his Church, it seemed to me such a perfect Exemplification of what I advise in the Book, that I might seem to have learnt all from his practice (though I never heard him before). And I have great hope, that the example of one so eminently Pious and Learned, of so excellent a Temper, and such unwearied Labours in the Ministry, may do more toward introducing seriousness and reverence in Divine Worship, than these Papers can do themselves: wherefore I have ventured (without his knowledge) to propose his Example in conjunction with my endeavours; humbly begging his pardon, if he be offended to have his Name mentioned by so unworthy a Pen.

Advice

concerning Divine Worship

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Advice

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

Offered to

Readers and People.

Directions for READERS.

HE that will perform this Service as he ought, must first be prepared with true Devotion in his Mind and Spirit.

Two things are needful for the explication of this. *First, that the expression of Devotion is a necessary part of Worship. Secondly, that it will be difficult for the Reader to make such Expression, if he have not real Devotion in himself.*

For the first, I shall only observe, that it is the very nature of Publick Worship, to be an outward expression of such affections.

ons of our Souls as are due unto God alone; and such an expression as is most unto his Honour and our own and others Edification. This, I think, no man will deny. And for that reason our Liturgy for this Worship is fitted to express a great humility and fervency in supplicating the Divine Majesty, as the Spring and Fountain of all our comfort; and a great joy and exultancy in extolling his greatness, and praising his goodness, as the perfection of our Felicity; and also to be accompanied with actions suitable thereunto. And he that reads the Prayers with a rambling haſt, without ſuch due expreſſions of Devotion in the manner of his Speech and Actions, quite alters the nature of the thing, and ſpoils the deſign of it.

Every man of any ſenſe, can diſcern the indecency of reading ſuch words as [**Lord have mercy upon us, Chriſt have mercy upon us, Lord have mercy upon us**] with ſuch a manner of ſpeaking as ſignifies but little Devotion and fervency of mind. And ſo they may alſo of ſaying the *Gloria Patri*, and *Te Deum*, &c. without ſuch cheerefulneſs of Speech, and reverent acts of Adoration as become the ſame. Neither can we think, that we

honour God by any words we speak, if we do not appear fervous and devout in pronouncing the same: nor will it at all edifie our selves or others. For words do not work here as Spells and Charms, but as rational Instruments that signifie the belief and affections of our Souls; which they cannot do, but by being so pronounced, and accompanied with fit actions as aforesaid. So that upon these reasons, the Reader is obliged to the expression of Devotion in his performance of this Service.

But besides, he that is careless in making such expression of Devotion in reading the Prayers, doth very much to prevent the conversion of Infidels and Papists, to excuse the Nonconformity of all kind of Separatists, and to encourage the Prophane in their neglect to attend these Sacred Offices.

To explain this, I must intreat the Reader to consider, that notwithstanding the confusion of Tongues, there is one universal Language understood by all Mankind, high and low, the ignorant as well as the learned: And those that know not the meaning of the words we speak, or can well perceive whether we speak Sense or Nonsense, yet by this can give account
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of what we say or do, as to the general tendency thereof. And this language consists in the Tone of our Words, and Mode of our Actions; by these they know whether a man means Love or Hatred, Anger or Good pleasure, Honour or Contempt, in the common conversation of this life: and so in the matter of Religion, they know by these, whether a man, being in the Church, means the adoration of a God, or a phantastick observation of persons or things there present; whether he means *a natural delight* in exercising his Gifts and natural powers, and in attending to the Musick of Words, Voices, or Instruments, (for there is no great difference, if no more be meant) or a *Spiritual employment of his mind upon God, and the things of Religion, as his chiefest joy.*

And this kind of Language, (for so I here call it) as it is understood most generally, so it works most powerfully on the minds of men, and disposeth them to believe what it expresseth, more than any Rhetorick of words can do. And though these expressions, as well as that of Words, requires some caution for the right understanding them, and may be abused by Hypocrites, to cheat and deceive the world; yet

yet since , according to mens understanding of them, (and till they are convinced of the Hypocrisie) they do incline and affect their minds, men are to account themselves concerned to make such expressions for their conviction and edification ; and that the rather , because else the Souls of Men will be betrayed to those that lie in wait to deceive by such false appearances. And it is not a thing arbitrary, and at mens liberty, whether they will use these expressions or not : For since they are so significant of our adoration of God, or fervency in our Prayers to him , and exultancy in his praises ; we must be obliged thereunto, by vertue of the Commands of worshipping God, of so praying and praising as is worthy of him ; besides the many Examples of this in Scripture. And indeed, the Minds of men are so apt to be inclined by these , that they will scarce believe we truly mean the Worship of God , except we express it by such signs. Now to apply this to the present purpose.

All Nations , according to that knowledge which naturally they have of this, have instituted and practised such Expressions of their Honour and Respect unto the God they worshipped ; and the more
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the *Papists* have declined from the substance of true Piety, the more they have endeavoured to keep up the reputation of it, by outward signs of Devotion; and all *Sects*, as they have formerly, so do they still make the appearances of extraordinary Devotion, the means to introduce their Errours and Schisms. Now taking this for granted, that it is part of the Law written in the hearts of all men; that whatever is acknowledged to be God is to be worshipped and adored; and that as the Name of God is great and dreadful, so his Worship should be awful and serious; and that they all understand by the means forementioned when it appears to be so; I say, on such premises we may conclude, that be our Religion never so good, neither *Papists* nor *Sectaries* will ever be inclined to consider it, nor brought to embrace it, while they perceive a defect of these Expressions of Devotion in our most solemn Offices of Divine Worship, and whilst they think they out-do us in a matter they are so certain to be good and well-pleasing to God, and profitable to men.

- And I believe there can scarce be assigned a more probable Cause then this, of the great averfeness both of *Papists* and *Separatists*

ratists to joyn in our Common-Prayer : For both these have great appearances of Devotion in their several Ways : The *Papists*, in their frequent bowing, and other acts of Adoration ; the *Fanaticks*, in their seeming fervency and seriousness in Ex-temporary Prayers : And these latter (in whom we are most concerned) are necessitated to some kind of seriousness and intention, as that without which no man can pray in that Way with any tolerable sense and method ; and many, who with greatest intention and seriousness can scarce do either, are the more obliged to a greater fervency, at least in shew, in calling on the Name of God, with seeming earnestness ; and to use his Titles and Attributes over and over, and all to cover the defects of their invention. But this however looks like the Expression of a great Devotion, and is so understood by the unwary multitude. If therefore they perceive no Expressions in our Way that bear proportion to the same, it is impossible but they will prefer theirs before it ; and hence they generally argue, that they are not bound to joyn in a Way of Worship that is worse, when they have opportunity to have Communion in a Way that is better.

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Now the main thing in which it is better in their opinion, is this, that they perceive in the Ministers of their Way a great sense of Gods invilible presence, and a great seriousness and fervency of mind in their Prayers to him; which they cannot perceive in our Way, when the Prayers are read without such Expressions of Devotion, as I here affirm to be necessary.

And then it encourages the profaner sort in neglecting these holy Offices: For when they see the *Readers* of the Prayers so slight and superficial, and to express so little seriousness and Devotion in Reading, they will never think themselves guilty of any great sin in being slight and careless in hearing, or very indevout if they never come to hear them at all. These things shew a necessity of expressing Devotion in reading the Prayers. But,

Secondly, *This men will very hardly do, if they have not the truth of it in their own Souls.* 'Tis true, men may very easily discern by natural Reason, the decency of humouring words with a *pronuntiation* suitable to the matter they contain, and of joyning therewith a fit and comely *deportment* of the Body; and they may know by common observation, that as this

is Praise-worthy , so it is of good Report among men: And so it may be thought, that in compliance with their own Reason, and to gain applause among men, *Readers* may well enough compose themselves to counterfeit Devotion in performing the Office of Common-prayer; and that, although they have none of the truth of it in themselves.

I confess, for my own part, I think a counterfeit Piety so much better for the Church than a profess'd Formality, that I wish the Prayers were devoutly read, on what account soever it be done. But when I consider how Error hath weakened the respect that should be had to Devotion in the way of Common-prayer, and observe the great slightness and general formality that is too common in hearing it, I am afraid that this will prevent *that consideration* in most *Readers*, and quite inervate the force of such arguments; so that if men have not a great Devotion in themselves, they are more like to be ashamed than inclined to counterfeit it: For when they see that men generally think they have acquitted themselves very well in the matters of God's Worship, if they do diligently attend to what the Minister

nister prays and preaches in the Pulpit, though they little regard what the *Readers* do in the Desk ; *Readers* will think it little concerns them to regard it neither ; and so they are apt to hasten the Prayers out of the way , to make room for that which they see is chiefly intended , viz. the Sermon. But now if we may suppose a *Reader* to design this , we may find reason to think that it is much harder for any one in this case to personate the man he is not , than in any other that can be named : for the sense of an Omniscient Being , who is especially present , and requir^{es} *truth in the inward parts* , abhorring all hypocrisie and dissimulation , and that more peculiarly in the Offices of his immediate Worship and Service ; I say , the sense of this , will be apt to beget such a dread in their minds , as will hinder their attention to the right performance of a counterfeit Devotion. For certainly , as nothing is more helpful to the most decent expression of Devotion (where it truly is) than the lively sense of Gods Presence ; so nothing can be more apt to discompose the mind that designs not at all to express , but onely to counterfeit Devotion , than this. Again , mens defect of true Piety
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oft betrays them to groſs Vices, which not only impreſs a guilt on their minds, but alſo make them conſcious, that all that know them will judge their ſeeming Devotion to be but a kind of Pageantry; and this will very much increaſe the difficulty of the thing. So that I think I may conclude, that he which would read the *Common-Prayer* well, ought to be prepared with true Devotion.

But here I muſt inſert a Caution, that I do not approve of them that make a ſcorn of the appearances of Devotion in ſome *Readers*, becauſe they are reported (it may be truly) to be often guilty of intemperance in drinking: For I believe, notwithſtanding *that*, they may be ſincere. *There is no man that lives and ſins not*: And there is a great deceitfulneſs in ſin, and this deceit operates moſt on the perſons where it moſt prevails; and therefore I have often obſerved, (and ſo have wiſer men) that ſome perſons whom all the Town have marked for covetous men, would not believe themſelves to be ſo: and ſo it is with Spiteful, Rageful, Froward, and Revengeful perſons, and many others. And it may be ſo with theſe.

And though Intemperance (the ſin oft-
neſt

nest insisted on) may seem to the Obje-
 ctors (and many others not inclined there-
 unto) to be much a greater vice than the
 fore-mentioned, yet it may not so seem to
 them that are guilty; and also they may
 think that their ordinary measures, though
 greater than others, is no sin, and their
 lapses into such measures as they cannot
 deny to be Excesses, and to disguise them
 (as all vices in some kind do) may be but
 infirmities, and as such be pardoned by the
 mercies of the Gospel, on the exercise of
 their daily Repentance. And though I
 think (as I said) that there is much of
 Cheat in this, yet while they believe their
 sins to be consistent with a state of Grace,
 and profess and practise a kind of Repen-
 tance, (though not such as will obtain
 their Pardon) I say, in such cases I believe
 their expressions of Devotion may not be
 charged with Hypocrisie: For they may
 truly mean to adore, supplicate, and praise
 God; and it may be the more truly, be-
 cause they think he will not exact such ob-
 servances as they think themselves unable
 to perform. And I am afraid, that sort of
 men who most complain of this Reader,
 hold some Principles that give too much
 help to that vain hope whereby such men
 cheat

cheat themselves to their eternal ruine; and while they blame others, sin deceives in this matter, even themselves. For it is a great cheat to think, that because men do amiss in some things, God will accept nothing that they do; and as great, that men may commend nothing in such: For, as it is evident, never any did any thing well for God, but it was accepted at his hand, unto such purposes as were meet, and tended to draw them farther, and not discourage them. *Nebuchadnezzar, Ahab, Jehu*, and many more, are instances of this: And all wise men, and some Inspired ones, have commended whatever of Vertue or Piety they found in the worst of men: *Paul*, for instance, in the *Jews*. Therefore I conclude, though some *Readers* who perform this Service well, and make fit expressions of Devotion in their outward behaviour; I say, though they may be often guilty of Excess and Intemperance, yet we cannot condemn them of Hypocrisie, nor ought to discourage them in what they do well: but our Duty is by all means to *admonish them daily*, and to convince them of the *deceitfulness of their sin*, that they be not *hardned* by it; and perswade them of the

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necessity of universal Repentance and Obedience, as that without which God will never accept them into the embraces of his Fatherly love, however he may forbear them some temporal Judgments, and give them some temporal Blessings; much less will he bring them to his Heavenly Kingdom: Nor can the true Children of God and this Church maintain such intimate Converses with them, nor shew such brotherly kindness to them, as to sober Christians. Nor ought the Church to continue them in her Communion, if they do not speedily reform and amend their lives. But yet we may not decline their Ministration, nor make any Schism in or from a Church on their account, or condemn them of Hypocrisie in their expressions of Devotion.

But because I would not be thought hereby to excuse such men, or give them any encouragement to presume, I intreat them to consider, that the Evangelical Precepts of *Perfection* are plain and cogent: The Grace vouchsafed is *mighty and powerful*; and to those that will *fight* manfully, the victory is certain; every one that *seeks* as he ought, shall find *a way of escape* out of every temptation; for *God will not suffer*

fer us to be tempted above that we are able :
 If we will resist the Devil , he will fly from
 us ; if we will walk in the Spirit, we shall
 not fulfil the lusts of the flesh ; for the Spi-
 rit that is in us, is stronger than he which is in
 the world , or than the most importunate
 lusts of the Flesh. Therefore it is onely
 our willingness to yield , that makes us
 easie to be overcome : and he that thinks
 otherwise, dishonours the Grace of God,
 discourages vigorous Endeavours after
 that *Perfection* which is the *mark* we should
 all aim at, puts the Conscience on the
 Rack, or, as the Prophets phrase is , *stays*
long in the place of breaking forth of Chil-
dren, enjoying no ease and content in his
 mind, and prevents himself of the highest
 Joy in the hope of Eternal Life : Besides,
 he is an offence to his Brethren , tempts
 them to *forsake* , if not *abhor* Gods Altar,
 and prove *Separatists* from the best Church
 in the world, and neglect their attendance
 on the most solemn and edifying Form of
 Divine Service ; and many more mischiefs
 which are consequent unto an indulging
 themselves in that unmanly vice I here
 treat of. Wherefore I earnestly beseech
 all *Readers* to break off all evil Customs of
 this kind , and to endeavour a perfect

Temperance and Sobriety. I have been long on this Head, because I think it of greatest weight; I shall be brief on the rest.

3. Being prepared as before, he *must endeavour to carry a sober Gravity in his Countenance*, as becoming his sense of approaching the Divine Presence, in the most solemn Exercises of holy Worship; And also the knowledge of this Office, that he is Gods Embassador to his people, and their Spokesman to God, (for so is every *Reader* rightly Ordained, as well as the *Preacher*; and in reading the Scripture as a Minister of the Church, he speaks from God with the greatest Authority) he should therefore suppress in himself all timorousness and bashfulness, and carry a decent Majesty and gravity in his Deportment and Countenance.

4. He must make those *ends* to which the several parts of this Service are designed, to be *his own*: He must endeavour by reading the *Sentences of Scripture*, and the solemn *Preface* at the beginning, to compose the minds of the people to great seriousness and true penitence. By reading the *Absolution*, to confirm their hopes of Mercy and Pardon (but without presumption.)

ption.) By reading the *Prayers*, and repeating all parts, of Praise and Thanksgiving, and the *Responses* and mutual provocations to Devotion, &c. he must earnestly intend not onely the expression of his own holy affections, but to excite the like in others. There is a vast difference between the bare reading the *Prayers*, and this manner of speaking to God and man thereby, making the words as if they were our own.

5. He must endeavour, by a clear Voice, and distinct Pronuntiati^on, to make himself understood of all, and by a treatable Speech to make it easie for the people to follow him, especially in those parts of Worship wherein they are to joyn their Voices: But yet not so slow neither, that many should run before him in repeating the *Prayers* and the *Belief*, as people are apt to do; which seems to me a very indecent thing, and an affront to the Ministerial Office, which is always to lead in the publick Duties of Religion. And in repeating the *Psalms*, he should make such observation, that his Speech may bear proportion with the generality of the Congregation; and that there be no pause between their ending one Verse and his beginning.

ginning another, but that he come in with them at the last word ; which makes this Exercise more like *Psalmody*, the thing for which it is intended; wherein the people do much want to be well instructed, for this would turn their prejudices against this manner of reading the *Psalms* into a great Devotion, and make them have a great delight therein, as a thing which hath most of Heaven of any thing that is done here on Earth.

6. In the reading the *Solemn Prayers*, he must put on the greatest gravity, and outward expression of humblest Reverence and Devotion ; this being one principal part of Divine Worship, wherein we apply our selves most immediately to God himself, and make the nearest approaches unto his Throne of Grace. And he must labour to excite the same expressions of Devotion in the People, (as by his own Example, so) by the affectionate pronunciation of these words appointed thereunto, **Let us pray :** than which nothing can be better ordered, to distinguish between the *Solemn Prayers* we offer up to God, and those we make in the way of *Psalmody*.

Especially in the repetition of the *Lords Prayer*,

Prayer, I earnestly recommend the most devout Reverence and Fervour. We cannot but know, that as God hath greatest regard to that, as the composition of his dear and onely Son, (his eternal wisdom appearing in our flesh) and the *Catholick Church*, guided by the Divine Spirit, hath ever had it in great veneration, as the instruction of her Lord and Saviour in the most principal part of her duty, and declaration of her *Catholick Unity*: So every Minister of God and his Church should shew his great esteem thereof, by the most solemn and devout manner of repeating the same. Besides, in honour of the Author, and for the excellency of the matter, and the comprehensiveness of the words (as well as in conformity to God and his Church) this is required at their hands. And I insist particularly on this, because I have observed, that many *Readers* having this Prayer more perfectly by heart than any of the rest, they ramble it over with a greater hast, and have less care to express that Devotion which becomes this Solemn Exercise, in reading that than any other; the amendment whereof I humbly desire of them.

And because I have a great desire that this may be amended, I shall here adde somewhat to what was said before. I have observed so great a proneness in all, even the most Grave and Devout, to say this Prayer faster than is meet, and without due Expressions of their sense of the Majesty of God, who is in Heaven, though our Father in Christ Jesus, and of the great concern of those things most briefly expressed therein; that I have in my thoughts inquired a little into the cause thereof, which seems to me to be this: That this Prayer being the first thing that we teach Children in the Exercise of Religion, there is not that care taken to make them say it distinctly and reverently as it ought, but they are suffered to do it with such Rambling haste, and without any regard of what they are about, that it begets an ill habit by long custom, which is so strong, that all the powers of Reason can scarce overcome it; for else it were impossible but that those men who are exceeding grave and intent in the Prayer they make themselves, should ramble at such a rate when they come to conclude with that our Lord and Master hath made for them; and in all Offices of our Church,

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(who would have none to want that which is the Sum and Substance of all our Prayers) this should have less of Gravity and Devotion in the repetition than any of the rest. I cannot but impute this to an ill habit that almost all men get in their Childhood, in this matter of saying the Lords Prayer; and upon account hereof, I make it my earnest Request to Parents, and especially those of the Female-Sex, (who have usually the charge of hearing their Children say their Prayers) that they will teach them, and often call upon them to say deliberately and distinctly what they speak in this holy Office, but especially the **Lords Prayer**: the want of this care, causeth most men, yea, Ministers, to have so ill a delivery, that it is very prejudicial to themselves and others, and a dishonour to the holy Offices they perform, and hindrance to Edification, especially in Ministers. And 'tis this that would season their tender years with a sense of God and Religion, which would never go out. Some Vessels never loose the favour of that which first of all is put into them, especially if it stand long; and if Children were first taught a right manner of performing their Devotions, and kept constantly

stantly to it , while under the tuition of their Mother , they would retain the effects of it through their whole lives. And we see by sad experience, the neglect of this not onely is cause of the habitual defect fore-mentioned, but betrays them to some ill Habits that make them a grief to their Parents all their days. And I have hope , if Mothers were but conscious of their duty herein , it would make them more wary of giving way to these frothy or froward humours, and that inordinate concern for little things, which indispose them for the same , and more willing to put on the ornaments of the inward man of the heart, which inables them thereunto , by giving them that reverence and respect with their Children without which it can never be effected.

I hint this, 1. because (as the welfare of Mankind depends very much on the good Education of Children , so) their good Education will be most effectually begun in the well performance of this duty; for in teaching them to say the **Lords Prayer** devoutly, they will have occasion to discourse to them of the glory and presence of God , of the awe and reverence we must have for him ; of his al-

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disposing Providence, and our dependance on him, &c. which are the Principles of all goodness, and also of the great indearments of our Blessed Saviour, and of the excellency of his person who taught this Prayer; whereby they will be disposed to true Christianity. And this foundation being laid, it will be easie to build them up in all Vertues.

2. Because I believe, that as Formality hath for the most part its beginning from the ill saying this Prayer, so it is most like to have its ending by our learning to say it aright; and he that can be devout as he ought in this, will be able to perform all acts of Devotion as becomes him. 'Tis the opinion of wise men, that Christ and his Church hath therefore thought better to teach us to pray, by prescribing us Forms, than by giving us a Directory for the matter of Prayer, and leaving the composurè to ourselves, because no laborious Exercise of the Memory or invention should hinder the free and vigorous Exercise of Devotion; and that these Forms are usually brief, (except those for Fasts, which for a peculiar reason are longer) lest that vigilant and erect attention of mind, which in Prayer is very necessary; should

should be wasted or dulled through continuance, if the Prayers were few and long, as *Mr. Hooker* hath it out of *St. Augustine*. Now when men pervert these ends, and because they are not necessitated to be intent, by being put to study their Prayers just when they make them, or to remember what they studied before, therefore they will take no care to be intent at all, but say their Prayers as a hireling doth his work, as fast as they can, that they may be at leisure for that which they take more pleasure in. And because they have these brief Prayers very perfect, their Devotion is the more imperfect; this is a very unworthy requital of the care of Christ and his Church: and how justly may such persons be given up to such Errors as have drawn many into Fanaticism? as, That Forms of Prayer are the bane of Devotion: The **Lords Prayer** is no Form: The way of Extempore Prayer is the only acceptable Service of God: And to pray by the Liturgy, or other Forms, is unlawful; and such like.

Let me therefore once more intreat the care of Parents in this matter, that they will, first by their own Example, in saying this Prayer most distinctly, gravely, and
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devoutly, and in the most reverent posture in their Family-Worship, and then by instruction suitable to the Capacities of their Children, and by the exercise of Parental Authority, bring them once to a good performance in saying this Divine Prayer by themselves, (which might be easily done if men had a mind to it) and then bring them to Church with them, and make them joyn with the Congregation in that Prayer, first, in a devout posture, and with a distinct and audible voice, (and this they can be taught very young) and this will beget a desire in them to joyn in the rest, a diligence in learning to read, and a good pronounciation in all things: and their concern to make their Children devout, would prevent another (that in the Church seems very indecent; and I mention it at the request of one much offended thereby) which is, a concern that their Childrens Hoods and Cloaths, sit in the best manner; and be kept clean; which makes them more busie about these things in the face of the Congregation, than about their Prayers: which I hope will seem to themselves so unfit when they consider it, that a word will perswade them to reform it. But to return to my purpose.

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7ly. He that *reads*, should not onely observe to do it in such postures as the Church hath ordered; as standing or kneeling, in the parts of Worship proper to each; but also with such natural actions, as lifting up the Eyes or Hands, &c. which the Church hath not ordered, because they are so obvious to the reason of all Mankind, as meet expressions of the inward Devotion of our minds; and such as are due to God by the very Law of Nature: and they are indeed so natural, that it is scarce possible, for a man truly devout, to forbear the use of them. And it seems to me a thing wonderful, how Satan hath blinded the minds of men professing the best Religion in the world, that they do not more plainly perceive the decency of such acts of Devotion, nor more generally practise them.

8ly. He ought also to make such fit Pauses where the people are to change their posture from kneeling to standing, that they may have time to rise up, and compose themselves for the acts of Adoration, especially before the repeating the words of *Glory* wherewith we begin the Office of Praise and Thanksgiving.

9ly. He ought also to give to each part
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of the Service the proper accent or measure of Voice belonging to the same: For it is not seemly that all should be read in one Tone; but those parts that are for *Instruction*, wherein he speaks to the people, should have one manner of reading; the *Prayers*, wherein he alone speaks for them, another; and those *Psalms* and *Prayers*, wherein they speak with him by turns, another. He that hath no understanding of this, nor doth observe it as it ought to be, can never *read* well.

10ly. It is also fit to give an Emphasis to some words in Reading, for the better expression of the devout affections which they may be supposed to excite. But some *Readers* have accustomed themselves to a kind of devout Tone which puts an Emphasis on Words where none is required; which plainly shews an affectation of Devotion where none is: Whereas nothing shews well in the Ministries of Religion, but that which appears to be natural, and the true effect of a devout Mind, directed by sober Judgment. But this, of all other, is most indecent in the repetition of the *Psalms* and all Alternate readings, because the people can observe no Concord in this, as they may when it
is.

is read with an even Voice, and without such long Pauses as such kind of Tones are usually accompanied withal.

11ly. And it is very convenient, that in *Reading* those things that the people are least perfect in, the *Reader* should take most care to speak distinctly and audibly; which I have often observed they do not: The reason seems to be, because the care of *reading* right, what they are least used unto, takes off from the regard they should have to read so that all may hear. The things I mean, are the *Collects* which are proper to several days, the *Prayers* to be used on several occasions, and the *Chapters* that are read out of the *Apocrypha*, &c.

12. Though it be a great advantage to this *devout manner* of *Reading*, to be so perfect, that he need not have a continual eye on his Book; yet until he be so, the *Reader* is not to venture on his memory alone: because mistakes are very indecent, and discompose the Auditory.

13. He ought also to make careful provision that all things be ready look'd out beforehand, that there be no cluttering of leaves in the midst of the Service.

And here I shall humbly offer to the
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consideration of the Governours of
 Choires in Cathedral Churches, the Reformation of a great Disorder, that I suppose proceeds from the neglect of something of this kind. I have observed myself, and heard many complain, (some out of Devotion, others in Reproach of our Service) that the Singing-boys are so rude and indecent in their Behaviour, that it makes that Service seem more like a carnal Divertisement, than the solemn Worship of Almighty God: The occasion whereof seems to me, to be the neglect of due care, that all the Singing-men and Boys know before-hand what is to be sung, and have it, every one, turned down ready in their Books: for the chief occasion of their talking to the Singing-men, and among themselves, is about this matter; and their being so used to talk in the midst of the Prayers, begets a profane Spirit in them, and is such an excuse for them, that they are ready to talk and laugh together, on other accounts, in the very face of the Bishops and the Masters of the Church: which hath given great offence to many; and, I believe, the suffering this hath been one great cause of the contempt of that Service among the common people, which makes

makes the Reformation thereof the more needful. I was lately told of an Order in some *Lutheran Churches*, whose Service consists chiefly in Singing the Psalms of *David* to the praise and glory of God; & Songs of love and honour to our blessed Saviour, composed by excellent persons among themselves, they have twice a day Assemblies for this Service; and that all may know what is to be sung, there is a Table hung up at the entrance of the Church, where it is written down what Psalms and Songs are appointed for the day; and the people (coming early to Church) go first to this place, and take notice what they are to sing, and look it out ready before the Service begins. Such an Order in our Choirs would prevent the indecency fore-mentioned, as also the Boys running up and down with Books to tell what Anthem is sung; which is also very indecent.

Neither is the care of cleanness and neatness both of Body and Garments to be neglected. The reason of the Judicial Laws for the Washings and curious Garments of the Priests, which was for the beauty and glory of the Worship they were to perform, seems to me to infer thus much

much at least, That those who administer holy things, should avoid all offensive nastiness and slovenliness, and appear before God and the Congregation as becomes the Ministers of the most holy God, and of the Church, which Christ designs to be *without spot or wrinkle*: and especially in administering those things which are more sacred and glorious.

The observation of the great proneness of *poor Readers* to neglect *this*, hath persuaded me of the convenient institution of the *Surplice*, to teach them cleanliness, and cover their defects therein; which yet will not prevail with many to keep Themselves clean, nor That neither.

Thus have I hinted such things as seem to make for the Solemnity and Efficacy of Divine Service; and the contrary whereunto, I have either observed my self, or heard others complain to be indecent: which I humbly offer to the consideration of those that are to read Publick Prayers. And I hope they will be moved the more to the exercise of their consideration in this matter, when they see the people do take notice what is decent and what indecent in their performance; and concern them-

themselves as much to have the Prayers well read, as to have excellent Sermons Preached. And upon such consideration, they will find far better Rules to direct themselves, than any my Pen can offer.

And I might use some Arguments to perswade all *Readers* to attend unto such most serious consideration of this advice; but I shall mention onely this for a Conclusion: That every one of them did declare (at their Ordination) *their belief that they were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take on them this Office and Ministry to serve God, for the promoting his Glory, and edifying his People.* Which if they truly were, the same Spirit will certainly incline them to such consideration as is necessary to the well performance of their Office to those great ends to which it is designed; and this is all I aim at in this Paper.

Advice

Advice to the P E O P L E.

HE that will perform this Service as he ought, must be duely prepar'd for the same. Now these Preparations are either Moral or Natural: The Moral are, 1. That we rightly understand, and well consider; that we compose our Minds to such a frame as becomes the Worship and Service of the most high God, and his Son Jesus Christ; and so that we may perform it as in the Fellowship and Communion of the Holy Ghost. He that thinks of nothing else at his going to Church, but of hearing some celebrated Minister, one that hath a rare *Gift of Prayer*, or excellent *Method in Preaching*, where he shall have his Mind stir'd up to good Thoughts, or his Fancy pleased with curious Notions, his Doubts resolved in hard points of Divinity, and himself assisted to defend his Opinions and Party against their opponents, and such-like things: I say, he that hath onely such thoughts at his going to Church, will never concern himself to be so serious and composed, and

and to put on such a heavenly frame of mind, as he that thinks *he is going to do the work of Angels*; to adore and worship that *Eternal Being that is enthron'd in the Heavens*, and that *Lamb of God who hath taken away the sins of the world*, who is in the midst of that *Thorne to celebrate their Praises*; to make our common *Supplications to God through his Son*: And to witness our *subjection to the Laws delivered by immediate inspiration of his blessed Spirit*, and to act and exercise the *Graces thereof in holy Communion*, &c.

And as this is evident from the nature of the thing, so is it apparent in the effects among men. For while these of the latter sort have always been concerned to approach the House of God with great reverence, and at their coming thereinto to be uncovered, and to bow down and worship, and to fall on their knees at their coming to the place of their station, to implore God's gracious assistance in the performance of this solemn and sacred Service; they of the former sort cry out of these things, that they are *Idolatry, Will-worship, and Superstition, &c.* And though not one of a thousand of them know the original import of those words,
nor

nor scarce what themselves mean by them ; yet are they extream confident in their own way of slightness and irreverence in approaching to Sacred Offices , (especially in Publick , where it is most indecent) and in reproaching us for what we think to be our duty ; the reason whereof, 'tis evident to me, is this ; That they see no necessity of such preparation for attendance on the Publick Worship , because in their Way, they find themselves as apt to be affected, by the Passions and Rhetorick , by the Voyce and Action of the Preacher , without such preparation , as with it ; and think it sufficient to lift up their Hearts to God when so affected, but without any outward expressions of Reverence and Adoration, and that this is the Worship God requires: and then indeed there were no great need of such a care to compose our minds for his Service. Therefore they think it needless that we do the fore-mentioned actions in our Way to that purpose, and for that reason load the same with such opprobrious names as before-mentioned. I confess I cannot but wonder (though I know some will be very angry with me for it) at the little Exceptions that are made against these things, which

which seem so very necessary and decent; and I hope, that (notwithstanding their great confidence) our opposites herein, on serious thoughts, may come to have a better opinion thereof.

I intend no Disputation (for I pretend not to Learning) nor doth the thing require it : For every thing that is fit to be done, is not fit to be disputed ; because that would suppose a difficulty where there is none. But I shall propound a few things to be considered , to bring men to right thoughts in this matter.

1. That the belief of the invilible *universal* presence of the most glorious and onely adorable Being, who hath made and doth govern all things, is one chief Foundation of all Religion.

2. That the belief of the *special* presence of his Glory and Grace, where the Offices of his solemn publick Worship is administred, is the chief reason of the meeting in Religious Assemblies for the performance of the same.

3. That the most express and intelligible acknowledgment of our present belief and sense of this his glorious and gracious Presence , is required of all the members of such Assemblies, both by the nature of the

the thing, and by Divine Revelation.

4. That uncovering the Head, bowing the Body, and falling down on our Knees, doth plainly signifie such acknowledgment, and that to the most dull and unlearned of Mankind; especially if they do but know that we meet together to worship God, as I observed before.

5. That because it may not be possible for them to mistake the meaning of that action, which is the chief cause of offence, our Custom is, when we bow down and worship, to do it towards the place where the Holy Table is. Now every man that will but enter into any consideration of this matter, must necessarily perceive, that if that action be done at all in the place of publick Worship, it cannot be fitly done any other way. For Quires, where it is most customary, (especially those I have seen) have one entrance at the end against the Communion-Table, and two others on the sides, over against each other. Now if a man at his entrance at the former, should think it better to face quite about, and bow towards the Door he came in at, than to bow right forward toward the Table, I believe he would make himself ridiculous to all the people, and so it

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would

would be, if he prefer bowing towards the people sitting on either side. Again, if two making their entrance at the Doors on either side, should chuse to bow strait before them, rather than to turn towards the Altar, can any think it would look so like an act of Divine Worship, as like their passing a Complement on each other? And if it should be done the other way, there would be a greater likeness of civil respect to the Company, than of Religious Worship. And something of like nature would be found in bowing any way but that in use; and that, however the entrance into, or scituation of the Quires be. So that the onely matters to be disputed are, whether it be lawful and fit, when we first come into the place purposely appointed, and presently to be used for the most solemn Exercises of Divine Worship, for us then and there to make acknowledgment that we are sensible we are come to appear in the special presence of God, and that, to give him the utmost Worship and honour we are able, and to do this by humbly bowing our selves before him; whether not best that all do it one way, and that way where there is something in the very place that may help
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to mind us of Gods condescension to be so graciously present, but where is nothing that may so much as seem to be the object of our respect but Gods invisible presence only. And they are things that seem to me to need no Disputation, as I said at first.

I know 'tis easie to multiply words on this Subject, but my intended brevity permits no more. I shall only recal what I first began withal, To remember those I write to, that as it is their duty so to manage all their secular concerns and worldly business, that they may never be habitually unprepar'd for sacred Offices (as all are, that live a carnal and unrighteous life) so they ought at the time when they are presently to approach this special presence of Almighty God, whose Name is great and dreadful, and who will be sanctified by all that approach him in acts of solemn Worship; I say, then especially they ought actually to prepare themselves, by a voluntary compolure of their Minds; and to attend the consideration of the glorious Greatness and amiable goodness of him they are going to Worship, and of his special presence in holy Assemblies; and a desire to express their own, and excite the

Devotion of others, to the honour of Almighty God. And I shall add this, that as they go to the Church, it will be very profitable to think of such sentences of Scripture as these: *Oh how dreadful is this place! this is no other but the house of God, this is the gate of Heaven. Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house; the place where thine honour dwelleth. Oh how amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my Soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the Courts of the Lord, my heart and my flesh thirsteth for the living God. I will go into thy house in the multitude of thy mercies; in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy Temple. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they shall be always praising thee. My Soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; whilst my mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips. One day in thy Courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.* Such Meditations will dispose us to that reverence and holy joy in God; as is meet to accompany us in the performance of this Service.

And this they are taught by the best of Preachers, in his Ecclesiast. Chap. 5. v. 1.

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God;

God; and be more ready to hear, than to offer the Sacrifice of fools. Which place I, the rather mention, because I have heard it perverted to a contrary sence, against this very thing; as if men ought hastily to run into the Church, and immediately fix themselves to attend to the Prayer or Sermon; and if we fall on our Knees to worship, and beg Gods gracious acceptance of our Service, and assistance to perform it as we ought, this is but the *Sacrifice of Fools*. Wherein briefly I observe these mistakes.

1. That the onely or chief part of Gods Worship in *Solomon's* time, was *Hearing of Sermons*; when indeed we have scarce any notice in Scripture that in the Temple there was any Sermons at all.

2. That this Custom which they condemn, was as ancient as the time of *Solomon* (which it may be they would grant a mistake, as being too much for its credit, if the whole strength of their Plea from the Text consisted not therein.)

3. That this was the onely or chief thing to which the name of *Sacrifice* was then appropriate: which I dare say they do not believe, (if ever it were at all called so.)

4. If that be meant by Sacrifices, that it must be the matter of the action, and not the ill manner of performance, that must denominate it the *Sacrifice of Fools*. For we know there were such things as are, in the most primitive and proper sense, *Sacrifices*, and that of Gods own appointment, which yet by ill circumstances might be made the *Sacrifices of Fools*. If any of these be a mistake, as I believe they all are, no proof of any ill in this Custom can result from this Scripture.

But it is not more certain that an ill humour in the Eye gives its own tincture to all Objects presented to it, than it is, that false opinions being once fixed in the mind, make men think all Scriptures sound the praise of their own Way, and the reproach of others. But if I might give the instruction which this Scripture affords, it should be this: That as the *Jews* of old were not to think it enough that they went to the Temple, and did their *Sacrifices* as was required; as to the matter of them; but ought diligently to attend to a due preparation and the right manner of performance, without which they would be accounted in the sight of God but *the Sacrifice of Fools*, wherein God
bath

hath no pleasure : So Christians now ought to take the same care, lest their slight and irreverent approach to the house of God, or any indecencies or disorders in what they do there, may render the Evangelical Sacrifices unpleasant unto God. These Sacrifices are those of our selves, and especially of our Bodies : for by words and actions we do the same thing that was done by the legal Sacrifices ; I mean in this respect, that they were *Ordinances of Divine Worship* : But the difference lies in this ; They were *Types and Figures for the time then present*, (as was the place where they were offered) and *ordained* by a positive Law ; These the Natural and Eternal worship, founded in the unchangeable rules of Reason, and therefore called our *Reasonable Service* : this Service we perform when our Bodies are imployed in the forementioned acts of Adoration, Prayer, Praise, and other parts of outward Worship. But it is not these bodily Exercises and External appearances, being alone, that can profit us, (however they may in some respects honour God, and edifie men) because the good they do is by accident, and not of design, as to our selves ; and therefore can no more profit us to our acceptance with

God, or increase my Piety, than what was there called the *Sacrifices of Fools* did them. And they are both foolish Sacrifices, because not done from a right principle, nor to a right end, in which true wisdom consists, much more than in the best manner of performance, if it be but in Masquerade, and for ill or mean purposes, but they are more foolish if *unduely* done, in a slight and irreverent manner; which they will be very subject to do, that are not so disposed as before. Therefore we ought diligently to attend to the preparing our selves, both by general Conversion, & Pious Resolutions before-hand, and by putting on such holy affections at the present time, as may animate our Devotions, and direct them to a right end; also continuing our care, all the time of Divine Service, that we be not diverted nor discomposed either by our inward thoughts or outward objects, but that the performance be according to our Preparations. And this is the thing to which I admonish, as our moral preparation for this Service. And I must adde one thing omitted before, that is very helpful to such composure for this Service, which is, That all persons do endeavour to be at Church before the Prayers begin, that they may

may more sedately approach the Divine Presence, and perform the reverence due to him, and (without any disturbance to themselves or the Congregation) take their place in the Church, and compose themselves as before. Certainly, it is a great advantage to a right performance, to do this: for when we come suddenly and hastily from our worldly businesses to Sacred Offices, it is hard to compose ourselves as we ought, to do them well; but being at Church before-hand, where we are retired from the World, and are helped by the Magnificence and Beauty of the place, and our custom of worshipping God there, to think of his glorious Presence, and fix our Minds on him by serious Meditations of his Attributes, Works, or Word, &c. I say, this is a mighty help to a right performance; then we may with more freedom make our Prayer to God for his gracious acceptance and assistance: and those who are offended when we do it in midst of the Service, can find no fault with us; and we shall prevent, as much as may be, the disturbing the Congregation by clattering of Pews, & by disordering others to get to our places, & calling the Sexton from serving God

to wait on us. And indeed, I have thought that sort of men very unhappy in this, that they can have little time and composure to attend this Holy Office upon that account; which every one should prevent as far as they can, considering they have Soules to save as well as we. But yet let not this, nor any thing else, prevent those who are necessarily hindred, that they cannot come early, from coming at all; it is better to come but to the Blessing, than wholly to forbear: God accepts the will for the deed, when we can do no more; and so he doth a part for the whole: and by declaring our willingness to do what we can, we keep up a reverence for the Prayers, and gain our selves a share with the rest of the Congregation in all the Blessings sought therein.

There is also one thing that I would advise, as a help to this, which is, that a certain time be fixed for the beginning of Prayers, for then every one can the better order his business, and watch the time that he may be ready; and where it is so, I know that men of great business may find time to attend daily at the Prayers. I have some great Examples near me, that I can scarce forbear to name, but that without

out leave I dare not. A Bell of a clear sound, and advantageously hung and rung some considerable time, will also be helpful in this case.

Secondly, The natural preparations are, *An ability to read distinctly that which we are to read, and to say perfectly by heart the daily Psalms and Hymns; that we may perform our part with the better grace.*

'Tis certainly a thing most evident to any that will consider it, that what is to be done in the sight and presence of Almighty God, and especially when it is to be done most immediately for his Glory and Honour, should be done in the most excellent manner that is possible; and therefore it will need no proof to those that believe what I have already written on that Subject, that this which I advise is a great and most concerning duty. And I the rather insist on it, because I have observed many who profess to be great approvers of the Common Prayer, and all the Orders of our Church, yet seldom or never read their part of the Psalms, or joyn in the Repetition of the *daily Hymns and Responses*: which I impute to their great carelessness in this matter. And many that do what is here required, do it so ill, that

that it is apparent they want some excitation to their duty hereabout.

I shall therefore intreat all that are defective herein, to employ their leisure hours to practise a more perfect and punctual way of Reading ; which will be a thing of credit and use to them otherwise , as well as here. I have sometimes been present, when men of good Quality and Estates have taken upon them to read some Pamphlet in a Coffee-house ; but read at such a pitiful rate, that a man could scarce make sence of it, or be ever the wiser for hearing it : which is a reproach to them among wise men ; for whatever the defects of their Education have been , it might easily have been supplied by their own diligence , if an inordinate love of Company and other Divertisements did not make them too much to decline profitable Retirements.

And I would intreat all Parents and Masters to consider the obligation that is upon them in this respect , to look that their Children and Servants do the same. We owe not onely our selves, but all ours, to the honour and service of Almighty God : And if Children were taught , as they should be, their duty to worship and
praise

praise God in the publick Assemblies, and encouraged therein by the example of their Elders, it would be a mighty Argument to perswade them to learn the most distinct and graceful way of Reading. I have been much pleased to see the good success of this care in some Parents that are well affected to the Common Prayer, whose Children read their part of the Psalms with a better grace than many Men. And when they do attain to a perfection herein, it will beget a great delight in that heavenly Exercise, and make them long to attend the Prayers; and this doubtless will be a mighty antidote against Prophaneness and Schism, and implant in our minds that Doctrine whence a holy Life cannot but spring.

II. That being prepared as before, we should endeavour our selves to perform our part of this Service in the best manner we are able.

There are some things which I have observed in the performance of the People, that seem to be very indecent: As first, That they speak when they should hear; repeating together with the Minister, (and often before him) the *Prefatory Admonition* wherewith the Minister is to begin this Ser-

Service; and also the *Absolution* which he gives after the *General Confession*; the *Commandments*, and many other things; which is by all wise men held very improper and indecent.

The Church hath ordered some things to be said after the Minister, with great advice. As, 1. The *General Confession*, wherein we solemnize that Repentance that gives us admittance into the reconciled state, and makes all our Services acceptable to God. And there is this great advantage in the conjunction of all in that thing with the Voice, as well as the Heart, That the professing of our Repentance in that manner, hath all the circumstances that may make it satisfactory and obliging, at least as far as the Church can provide in the case satisfaction. For herein every one doth as it were accuse, judge, and condemn himself before God and the whole Congregation, for sins contained under the general heads therein mentioned (the particular instances whereof are onely fit to be repeated in secret Confession to God himself) and if he do it seriously, with a Devotion suitable to the Words, it is to me a more satisfactory sign of penitence, than the enlarged Confessions.

sessions used in the other Way ; wherein
 some, (to seem fervent, or to make them-
 selves so) run into the enumeration of sins
 beyond due measures, being, as I think,
 beyond what the Congregation in general
 can be supposed (though Christians of a
 sort inferiour to themselves, at least in their
 own judgment) to be ordinarily conscious
 that they have been guilty in. And 'tis
 also obliging: for this should be a mighty
 argument against returning to sin when we
 have solemnly confessed our folly and guilt
 therein before God and the Congregation.
 For having as it were called God and Man
 to witness the truth and sincerity of our
 Repentance, it will be a high aggravation
 of our carelessness, if we suffer our selves
 easily to be drawn to sin again, and that
 either in omitting our Duty, or commit-
 ting Iniquity in any kind: and it will en-
 gage every good man to *watch and pray,*
lest he should enter into temptation; and be
 hurried into the sins for which he so con-
 demned himself.

The 2^d is the *Lords Prayer*; which (be-
 cause it teacheth the formation of the af-
 fections and desires of our Souls in the
 most excellent order, and to the highest
 perfection that is possible, and compre-
 hends

hends the heads of whatever is to be sought at the hands of God with greatest brevity and plainness) is necessary to be learned of all, even from their first attainment of the use of Reason and Speech; which the Church cannot better provide for, than by engaging them always to say it after the Minister: and besides, it is a declaration of our Christian unity, and a renunciation of all Heresies and Schisms, as far as we know them: And we do greater honour to God and our blessed Saviour, in repeating that Prayer in the most solemn and triumphant manner; and every one, by a great fervency and devotion therein, doth most effectually edifie his Brethren.

The 3d. is, the Repetition of the *Credo*; a thing so useful to implant the brief sum of Christian Doctrine in the memories of all; and to declare our common joy and exultancie in the belief and profession of those truths upon which the hopes of our common Salvation is built, as also to assist the production and growth of the blessed fruits and effects of our Faith, by a daily cherishing the Root; which we do by this solemn profession, and the renewed consideration that we should joyn with it: I say, a thing, in these respects
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(besides many other) that may be thought so useful, that all good men must needs commend the wisdom of the Church in ordering the same.

This is all of that kind in the daily Service, (to which this discourse chiefly relates) and in these things it is very commendable to say after the Minister: but now, if those that are naturally loquacious, finding a delight in saying what they should, remit the Exercise of their consideration so far, as to say that they should not; here is a fault that ought to be amended; and I am sure on serious thoughts they will freely incline so to do, that love our Prayers. For they will easily perceive, how indecent it is for them to say after the Minister, where he is supposed to speak to them either by way of Exhortation, Consolation, or Admonition, and that the People should absolve the Priest, as much as the Priest absolves them; this hath great absurdity, and on that consideration will, I hope, readily be reformed.

'Tis true, in the Conclusion of the *Ab-solution*, when the Minister speaks to himself as well as the People (as the result of his declaration of Gods pardoning mercy to the penitent) to exhort that we should
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beseech him to grant us true Repentance and his Holy Spirit, &c. we may very profitably joyn with a soft Voice, *Lord grant us true Repentance and thy holy Spirit, that those things may please thee which we do at this present, &c.* (And this will supply a defect which some complain of, viz. That there is in our Service no preparatory Prayer:) For being now presently to begin the most immediate act of Worship in the words of our blessed Lord, and to joyn with the Heavenly Host in Hallowing Gods Name, and to proceed to all the rest; it is meet that we prepare our selves with this humble desire, that God will assist the sincerity of our Repentance, and bestow on us the grace of his Holy Spirit, that the performance may be well-pleasing to him, and the effect profitable to us; and also rendering us more pure and holy in the remainder of our lives, and so securing our admittance into his Eternal Joys at the end thereof.

2. As the former custom of saying after the Minister where we should attend and say nothing, seems indecent; so it seems as much, if not more so, when the People say before him what they should say.

say after him : and this appears to be a disorder on the fore-mentioned account, That it is an invading his Ministerial Function ; for he is to lead and guide the people in all the publick Offices of Religion, and neither to follow their humours in the manner of his Prayers (if he were in other respects to order them as he pleased) or to follow the measure of their Voices ; (where the words as well as the matter is prescribed) though in both respects, Ministers are fain sometimes to depart from their right. And as I have known in former times many that used the way of Extemporary Prayer before their Sermon, onely to humour the people, when in their own judgment they much prefer'd the constant use of a well-composed Form ; so I know some now, who do read the Prayers very fast, and that beyond what the Solemnity of the matter can bear, onely (as I charitably hope) because they see the people so subject to this disorder of running before them ; which they know not how to remedy otherwise ; or because some hate to be long at Church. But besides this, there are other ill effects of this custom, in respect of our selves and others : For it much hinders the devout operation
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of the mind, which is much assisted by hearing the matter first spoken by the Minister, and fixing on the intent consideration thereof; on which account we speak afterwards with much greater fervency and affection; as every ones experience will witness, that will but try the thing.

(And again, those that have so accustomed themselves to speak before the Minister, are at a far greater loss to say a *New Prayer*, or *Penitential Psalm*, (which is sometimes ordered on Fasts, &c. to be said with the Minister) than those who are rightly practised in the other way, which makes it easie to say, very decently, such things after the Minister as we never heard before. For if we attend well unto the main of the Sentence which we are to repeat we shall be able to guess at the Conclusion; so that we need not stay till he hath quite done before we begin, but hear so as to say all right, yet may come up with him in the conclusion, as is most decent. And this would make much for the solemn performance of the Service on extraordinary times; wherein now, for the most part, onely the Minister and Clerk are Speakers, and the Congregation sit and look on; which to me, shews very ill.

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But further, I have heard some complain, that come over from the *Nonconformists* to our Church, and attend our Prayers, That this is to them a most offensive disorder, and that it tended very much to distract their Devotion, when those that sit by them thus ramble over the Prayers, and are at the end before the Minister is half way; and I believe it cannot but give some disturbance to the Minister himself: I am sure it hath been no small offence to my self; so that I could hardly forbear telling them of it, but that I considered it required more sedate discourse than that season would afford: And this was one chief cause I engaged in this work; and I hope those who have not considered this matter, will be perswaded, by what I have written, to order themselves better for the time to come.

The 3d thing is, that the people generally answer the Minister, especially in the *Responses* and *Psalmody*, with too soft a voice; and are so little heard, that it hath seemed to me (coming into the Church whilst that Exercise was performing (as if the Minister read a Verse, and then stop'd a while and read again, the people being so little heard; especially if the Clerk be
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absent (as he may have often occasion to be, where Prayers are read every day.) This seems to me very unsuitable to the nature of that Exercise, wherein we are to declare our Joy and Exultancy in God; and therefore in speaking, as well as singing, we should *lift up our Voices, and praise him lustily and with a good courage*, as it is *Psal. 84. 1.* And in many places the Scripture exhorts to a great cheerfulness in this Exercise, and to do it with loud and exalted Voices. And if we did so, it would make it shew like another thing than it doth in the way I reprove, and would render it more laudatory and honourable to Almighty God, and more pleasant and comfortable to our selves; and it would also remove the offence, that some take against it as Unedifying, for that it is onely on that account, because they cannot understand half the *Psalms* through the imperfect manner of the people in repeating it. For if every one spake as loud and plain in repeating his Verse, as the Minister doth in repeating his, (as they ought to do, if they would have it appear like *Psalms*, or an Office of Praise) there would be no cause for this Complaint by these, nor by those that cannot

not read, who might be helped by the next by-stander to perform their part without it, or at least understand as much as if the Minister read all, and be more edified in that holy Joy which this manner of reading is apt to beget.

And I wish also, that people had the art to speak in some kind of Concord with the Minister, either that their Voices might be Unisons with his, or a Fifth or an Eighth from it: For there is a *Speaking* as well as *Singing* together, that is very harsh, by reason of a discordancy in the Voices of those that perform it. And if men that have understanding in this matter, and good strong Voices, would set themselves to do their part, it would soon bring the Congregation to a better performance. And why should they not think themselves concerned so to do? Is there any Exercise in the world of a higher nature, or more immediately design'd to the Glory and Honour of Almighty God? Besides, it is done as in his sight and presence, and therefore to be done with a manly courage, and the best skill we are able. And nothing can be more exhilarating to pious minds, than to have communion together in celebrating

ring the Divine Praises, in repeating the
 Histories of his wonderful Works; nor
 more edifying, in provoking one another
 to worship, fear, and obey him, *speaking to*
our selves, and teaching and admonishing one
another, as the Apostle exhorts, in *Psalms,*
and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, singing with
grace, and making melody to the Lord in our
hearts, Eph. 5. 19. Colos. 3. 16. For the
 gracious Harmony which we find in our
 Souls between our Reason and the truth
 of the Divine Revelations, our Affections
 and the infinite goodness and suitableness
 of the objects therein proposed, especially as
 these powers are renewed by the Holy
 Ghost, must needs yield an unspeakable
 delight to our selves; and when we *make*
melody to the Lord, by exercising the Gra-
 ces of Faith, and Love, and Joy, and
 Hope, within us, and sing to him by expres-
 sing them to the sence of others, by this
 Solemn, serious, and joyful manner of
 speaking; we *teach and admonish one ano-*
ther, & by such pleasant conversation in re-
 peating those excellent parts of Scripture,
 sweetly insinuate holy Doctrine, teaching
 one another to follow God and his Saints,
 whose vertues and blessedness we celebrate;
 and admonishing one another to take heed
 lest

lest we have any fellowship with the wicked whose vices we condemn; and also remember their woful downfals, as ensamples to warn us to repent, lest we perish also.

Now this being so pleasant and profitable an Exercise, why should not all good men endeavour to revive the credit thereof, by the most excellent manner of performance? Certainly it had never been in the power of Satan or his Instruments to have brought into contempt this Angelical Exercise, if men had not remitted their care in this respect.

For our praising God, and communicating the delights of heaven-born Souls in this Way, is so accommodate to the capacity of all, descending to the very meanest, without abating the delights of the greatest, that it is strange any should not like it. I have known some Families, that for many Generations have been so defective in the way of artificial singing, that no one person of them could ever sing the Tune of a Psalm in any tolerable manner; yet these can praise God with the Congregation in this way of repeating the Psalms by turns; and Children may be much earlier taught to do it so, than in

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any other way. And yet it is no abatement of delight to others that are more skillful in Musick: For the way of Singing which is now most commended, is but a melodious kind of Speaking; and all Graces that hinder the understanding of the Words, are quite out of fashion. So that here is a delight that offers it self most early to be the felicity of Humane Nature, anticipating the base and bruitish delights of Sense, that press upon us for entertainment on the account of their being pleasant and necessary, before we can well discover the slightness of their pretences thereunto. And also this pleasure loseth not its Relish in Old age, but still continueth its force and power, to counterwork the insinuations of all contrary delights of that state, as far as they may be prejudicial to the true spiritual felicity of our minds and spirits.

And I perswade my self, that if persons of age and honour, and those that have some excellency of Art, would but design and endeavour to make the best of this way, they would find great satisfaction to themselves thereby, and also would beget an ambition in the younger sort to do worthily in performing their part of this
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heavenly *Psalmody*, and youth being so encouraged, would soon conceive such a pleasure as I have before spoken of: And this (in conjunction with other appointed means) would mightily facilitate the work of their true Conversion, engaging them heartily in that *spiritual Combat* against the Enemies of their Souls, and that serious prosecution of true and endless felicity, to which we obliged them by Baptism. For it is so evident, that Life without Pleasure is an empty name, and little more desirable than Death, that *David* lamenting in his own person the deplorable miseries to which man in his best state in this world is subject, asks the question, *Wherefore God hath made all men for nought?* And yet the Apostle tells of some who *lived in pleasure*, that they were *dead while they lived*. Whence we may conclude, that Man is a Creature capable of two sorts of Pleasure; Mental, and Carnal; and that these do for the most part militate against each other: and if carnal Pleasures prevail, and get the possession of our Life, we are said to be *dead* in respect of our minds and spiritual part: But if the delights of the Mind once take place, and become our employment, then the Body is said to be

dead by reason of sin, as the Spirit is life because of righteousness. So that it is of mighty avail ~~to~~ cherish these Spiritual pleasures, and depress those that are carnal, especially in the beginning of our life; as that upon which the happiness of the whole Life depends. And this, I think, may be done by a pious and prudent instruction in the fore-mentioned Duty, and by giving a good example to encourage the performance. I cannot give this matter the explication it requires: but I hope a word to the wise will be sufficient.

Having hinted these things, to rectifie what seem'd to me amiss; I shall now briefly represent that Behaviour which I judge most decent in the performance of these Sacred Offices. First then, having a due sense of what you are going about, *viz.* to approach the most glorious and dreadful presence of the Almighty; and having composed your minds to worship him with that Reverence and Devotion you ought, and declared this by the solemn manner of your coming into his House, and placing your self in the station wherein you are to perform your part in this holy Exercise; you are to fix your
eyes

eyes on the Reader as the Minister of God, the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts, sent to call you to Repentance, with offers of Peace and Reconciliation, that you may escape his dreadful wrath, which none can endure or withstand; which all the Host of Heaven and Powers of Hell, as well as all the Creatures here on Earth, are ready to minister against impenitent and profane wretches. You are to stand up and attend seriously to the reading of those *Scripture-Sentences* wherewith he begins this Service; wherein are declared, in the very words of God himself, the necessity of Repentance, and the certainty of Pardon and gracious acceptance to all that truly perform it.

You are also well to consider the inforcement of those *Sentences*, by his reading the *Exhortation* following; mean time reflecting on your self with a due remembrance of your particular sins, that you may be the better prepared to accompany him with a pure Heart and humble Voice in the *General Confession* following. And this Confession (as it is ordered) we should make in the most humble posture, which according to the use and custom of this Country, is kneeling on our Knees;

which none are to omit , except hindered by bodily infirmity , or such inconveniences as are sometimes occasioned by Crowds of people ; and then they must take care to supply that defect by other expressions of humble Reverence. And we ought so to speak in repeating the same after the Minister, that we thereby express, that we verily believe our selves to be guilty (in many particular instances) of such sins as are confessed under the several Heads therein mentioned ; and that we are heartily sorry for the same , and earnestly implore the Divine Mercy and Forbearance , and to be restored to his grace and favour, trusting to his Promises made to us in Christ ; and with no less earnestness desire the assistance of his Grace , to enable us to live better for the future. This faithful endeavour to appear as humble penitents before God and the Congregation, will suppress the workings of *Pride and Self-conceit* (the Parent of all vice) and strengthen the contrary Virtue , *Humility*, the Foundation and Nurse of all Virtues.

In attending in the same posture while the Minister, as Gods Herald, pronounceth *Absolution* and pardon of sins to the truly penitent,

penitent, that unfeignedly believe the Gospel of his Son, we ought to express a great Reverence of the Almighty (from whom he speaks) and also the most humble Thankfulness, and holy Joy for his rich Grace; which Grace is communicated to us by the Stewards of his Mysteries, and cannot be received in the contempt of their administrations, whom he hath impow-
 red to dispence the same: And withal, earnestly begging (according to his Exhortation) that our Faith and Repentance may be assisted by the divine Co-operation, that we never fail of the same Grace for want of meet dispositions to receive it, nor neglect the improvement thereof at present or for the future.

When we have thus prepared our selves, we ought, with heavenly Joy and great Fervency, to joyn with the Minister and Congregation in repeating that Divine Prayer which our Saviour taught. In the beginning of it (which is Eucharistical, containing such Petitions as are for the immediate honour and glory of God) lifting up our hands and eyes with our voices to Heaven, we declare our Joy in God, and exultancy in his Praises. In the rest (wherein we supplicate things necessary for

our selves) we should expresse greatest humility, in bowing our Heads and Bodies towards the Earth, as unworthy to ask so great things of so great a Majesty, and speaking with more lowly and humble Voices; until returning to the acknowledgment of his paternal Government which inclines him, his Power which enables him, and his Glory which engages him to be so good to his Creatures, and especially his Children, we lift up our Hearts and Hands, and with more chearful Voices repeat the *Doxologie*.

After this, being to pass to that high and heavenly work of praising God, the work for which chiefly we were made, and the excellent power of Speech given us; to which, while we continued innocent and happy, our mouth was still opened, and we had freedom and power to perform the same; but Sin and Sorrow, Guilt and Fear, Care and Vexations, have now even made us dumb to Gods Praises, and disabled us for due celebration hereof. I say, in this respect we ought most devoutly to joyn with the Minister in the Response following the Lords Prayer, **Lord open thou our Mouths, And our Lips shall shew forth thy praise. O God make**

make speed to save us, O Lord, make hast to help us. And while we seek his Grace, we should use our own endeavours to open our own Mouths, and lift up our Voices while we sing his Praises, and to awaken all our powers, to a cheerful performance of the Service.

The *Gloria Patri* follows, at the repetition whereof we are required to stand; a posture most fit in all manner of *Psalmody*, and when ever we speak or sing praise and glory to God; but especially in the publick Assemblies convened chiefly for that purpose. And in pronouncing these words of Glory, it would be very indecent to do it in any posture that is less reverent. To sit, is very offensive to all that desire to see this Service duely performed. And it is reason it should be so; for these words intend our most immediate Address to God, the ever-blessed Trinity in Unity, in the highest act of Worship; and so fitly do they serve to the Adoration of the Deity, according to the Faith our Religion requires us to have thereof; that the man that doth not express the inward reverence and adoration of his mind, by the manner of his pronouncing them, and his deportment at that time, gives a suspicion

of a defect in his Christianity, or is much mistaken in the way of expressing the same. This erect posture of our Bodies, would mind us to lift up our Hearts, yea, and our Voices too, in giving praise and glory unto this blessed Trinity; whereas the other disposeth us to a defect in both.

Being next to proceed to praise God by the repetition of the *Psalms* of *David*, &c. the Minister (that he may mind us that it is not the ordinary reading those parts of Scripture for instruction, but the repeating them as an Exercise of Praise and Worship to Almighty God) is ordered to say, **Praise ye the Lord**; and the People to answer, **The Lords Name be praised**. In hearing and saying such words, we must excite and express holy desires, that we may so perform this Exercise, as may tend most abundantly to the Glory and Honour of Almighty God.

The Psalm with which we always begin at Morning-Prayer, is, **Come, let us sing unto the Lord**; and is most fitly chosen, both for mutual provocation to this heavenly Exercise, and also for instruction in the reasons thereof; and withal to perswade to the obedience of all his

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commands in the whole course of our lives, which should be consequent thereunto; shewing in the conclusion the dreadful danger of not attending to the same: which excellent matter requires that we be serious and intent in repeating this Psalm, as that which will prepare and dispose us to be so in all the rest.

As for the *repetition of the Psalms* in course that follows, I have hinted what is needful before: onely let me remember, that none should take liberty to fit in that performance, except constrained by bodily infirmity; because standing is so much more fit a posture for the Office of Thanksgiving; and sitting was counted so indecent in the Primitive times, that the whole Service was called *Station*; and is onely indulged now for bodily weakness, (but not order'd) because of the great decay of Piety, which will not bear such strictness.

After the Psalms, a *Chapter* is read out of the *Old Testament*, that we may be instructed in the Doctrine of the Creation and Government of the first World, its Destruction and Restitution, the promises of the Messiah, and procedure of Gods Grace in preparing men for himself; as also the correspondency of our Saviours
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Doctrines to that which God of old delivered by his Prophets ; his agreement to the Types and Figures of him under the Law , and the accomplishment of what *Moses* and the Prophets wrote, in that which he was, did, and suffered : in such, and many other respects, the reading thereof is profitable ; and therefore all Talking, Gazing, and careless behaviour (too often seen at this time) should be avoided, and we should appear as diligent Auditors to those Divine Oracles.

The instruction and respite we have had hereby, should cause us to return with greater joy and cheerfulness to our heavenly work of praising God. For which we have next prepared the Evangelical Hymn *Te Deum* ; the most excellent that ever was composed by man, and speaks as much of divine Inspiration as any thing (not acknowledged for such) ever did ; so fitted for divine Adoration, and apt to excite Devotion, and to minister most abundantly to the Consolation of good Christians, that even that alone (methinks) should draw us to Church, if not withheld by great obligations. I do therefore most earnestly recommend to you the most solemn appearance, and the most devout

vout acts of Worship, and the most plain, joyful, and reverent manner of speaking, and what ever you can think becomes the repetition of those excellent words.

. The Adoration of our God and our Saviour by the foresaid Exercise, cannot but dispose us to hear the Doctrine of the *New Testament*, out of which a Chapter is next read; which, reporting to us either the wonderful History of Christ and his Apostles, or their holy and incomparable Doctrine, cannot be too diligently and reverently attended to: And I should think those who have strength of body, would do very commendably in standing up at the reading thereof.

Then we are ordered to return again to the work of *Praising God*; which nothing but Carnality can ever be weary of. And the *Psalms* here appointed, are such as minister most fitly to the Joy conceived by hearing the glad tidings of the Gospel sent to the *Gentiles* (of which we were) as well as to the *Jews*; and therefore to shew that we have not received *that Grace in vain*, nor heard the Gospel of it without diligent heed, we should repeat that *Psalme* devoutly and joyfully.

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The next that follows is the *Creed*, which contains those matters in which all Christians are of one mind, (which do *believe with their hearts to Righteousness*) and of which all Christians must make publick Profession, that will *Confess with their mouths to Salvation*. We therefore, in one posture (and with all our Faces one way it should be) do with one mouth repeat that excellent *Form of sound words*, which so excellently ministers to the steadfastness of our Faith, our rejoycing in Hope, our unity in Love, and cheerfulness in the Praises of God and our Saviour; that no man, that considers it, could chuse but stand up and bear his part with us; and he that finds no joy and elevation of mind in repeating the *Creed*, hath nothing else but a *natural* delight in hearing the most excellent Sermon, or ravishing Prayer: For these can have no *Matter* that is more transporting; and if it be onely the *words* or *passion of the Speaker* that affects us, 'tis no *spiritual* delight. Let those therefore take heed, that regard not to honour God, and expresse the joy of their Faith, by a due performance in this matter.

After this, we return to the solemn duty of *Prayer*; which that we may perform
with

with mutual Charity , and great Devotion , the Minister salutes the people with that excellent Option, **The Lord be with you :** and they return, **And with thy Spirit.** Which words, spoken with the holy affection they ought , are apt to beget such a disposition of mind , as will render the Prayers very acceptable to God, and edifying to one another. The Minister yet farther (to awaken all the powers of our Souls to this most serious business) is to say, **Let us pray :** which therefore we should compose our selves to do with all our might.

The *Response* wherewith we begin, **Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy,** serves most fitly to assist this endeavour of great fervency ; and being repeated without it, seems very indecent , and a kind of *vain Repetition* : therefore remember this.

Then we renew the Repetition of the *Lords Prayer* ; which Prayer certainly is of that excellency , that no Christian should think it too much to use it both in the beginning and end of this Service. And indeed, this is the very sum and substance of all our Prayers ; and others are added onely for greater solemnity , and fuller

fuller explication : And therefore the oftner it is repeated, the more devoutly it should be said, and greater fervency excited : of which before.

To relax a little this great intention of mind, we have ordered a most excellent *Response*, wherein the Minister and People exchange some devout Ejaculations, for themselves, for their Superiours, and Brethren : which as they mix somewhat of holy delight with fervency, so they greatly strengthen the Bands of Christian Unity.

The rest of the time we spend in repeating severall *Collecſs*, most excellent for the matter, and comprehensive for the words ; in praying for the King and Royal Family, for Magistrates and Ministers, the Church and State, all Christians, and all Men ; and we give solemn thanks for Gods mercies to us and them : in all which we should strive to preserve a constant intention, and true devotion of mind : and if to that end we accompany the Minister with our Voice, it should be always with such caution as I have expressed before ; and so it may be very useful thereunto ; and also it would make us perfect in saying the Prayers, which may be of great

great use to us in other cases, besides our joyning with the Congregation therein. But if men having got the faculty of saying the Prayers readily by heart, do let their Tongues run before their Wits, and say faster than it can be thought they understand, or well consider what they say; then they abuse Gods good gifts. 'Twas greatly blam'd by the Apostle, that some of those who had received the miraculous gift of Tongues, were so forward in the use of it, as that it hindred their due consideration of the things they spake; for amending whereof, he proposeth his own Example to their imitation, saying, *I will pray with the Spirit*, but yet so, as *with the Understanding also*; and I think there may be something drawn from hence for our instruction in this matter. I take the liberty of repetition and enlargement herein, because I have often heard this disorder complained of, since the first Edition of this Book; and many with the Reprinting of it for that very reason, that some may lend or give them to those in whom they observe this, to rectifie their practice herein.

But in the whole performance, I earnestly admonish all men to avoid sitting, lol-
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ling, leaning, and all indecent postures, and to continue kneeling meekly and devoutly, if their strength permit. And I think men are too apt here to plead infirmity, out of indulgence to the Flesh, which should be taught to suffer something for the Honour of God, and interests of our Souls, which have suffered a great deal by its pleasures and passions: and I doubt not, the pain we endure to express our reverent Adoration of the Almighty in this his solemn Worship, shall be accepted as a part of that Mortification God requires, and of our Conformity to Christ and his Church; and no Christian that considers the great and most dolorous pain wherein Christ offered himself in Sacrifice on the Cross, can think much to endure some little pain, that we may offer our Sacrifices of Prayers and Praises with that reverence which becomes us: nor can any man have that sense of the Adorable Majesty of the most High, when his Head and Elbows lie on the bench of his seat, as when he kneels in an erect posture with his Eyes and Hands lift up to Heaven. The actions of the Body have a great influence on the Soul; as well as, on the contrary, the Souls affections move it to
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act. Besides the decency of this, which is so evident, that I may appeal to men themselves in this case, as the Apostle in another of the same nature, (being in a matter of indecency in Gods Worship) *Judge in your selves what is meet.* Can any man think it fit to supplicate the infinite Majesty of Heaven and Earth in any but the most humble posture of body, (which with us is Kneeling) or that we ought to sit on our Breeches when we sing or speak praise unto him? Certainly the power of Errour is very great, that it can blind the mind of man in a matter so evident and plain. But I trust that those to whom I write are not so deceived.

Yet I would not be thought to commend any such uneasiness, as is either against the due Composure of the Mind, or the good Estate of the Body: I know God will have Mercy and not Sacrifice, and prefers the due operations of the Mind before the most devout actions of the Body, (especially where they cannot be both in perfection, but the exactness of one necessitates some relaxation in the other) But there is an uneasiness that is so small, that it rather helps than hinders inward Devotion, and disturbs nothing but a lazie

lazier humour, or ill habit ; things no way to be Indulged. But yet where there is such real infirmity as justly excuseth from Standing , Kneeling upright , &c. men should be careful that in what posture soever they be, they make such expressions of seriousness and Devotion , that it may appear to the Congregation that they omit nothing out of laziness, contempt of the Orders of the Church , or a profane Spirit.

I have now run over the daily Office of *Morning-Prayer* ; and shall proceed no farther, because he that will observe what I have written in that , cannot be to seek in ordering himself aright in all the rest.

It may not be inconvenient in the Conclusion , to offer something that may help us to shew our Devotion in leaving the Church, as well as in coming to it and continuing there. It is said of the ancient Jews , that they went out of the Synagogues backward, that they might declare their unwillingness to leave Gods house, in which holy men have desired ever to dwell. And (however that way of expressing it may seem to some) I am sure
there

there ought to be such affections in us as they would thereby signifie ; and nothing we do that is contrary thereunto, can seem decent to wise men ; and if peoples hurrying out of the Church as soon as ever the Sermon or Prayers are ended , be not apparently contrary to such affection , my conceit deceives me ; especially, when they will not stay to take Gods Blessing along with them ; I say Gods, for though a man pronounceth it , yet it is such a man , as is his Minister and Herald, the Steward of his Mysteries, whose words, as such , he will never suffer to fall to the ground, but will give them their effect on all that are meet subjects : and therefore to despise that glorious and mysterious blessing wherewith these holy Offices are concluded , shews great ignorance or profaneness, and little manners, and is an affront to the blessed Trinity , and to the Congregation met to do Worship thereunto.

P O S T-

P O S T S C R I P T.

ONe thing I have thought fit to add, as
 useful to the design of this Paper,
 which is, My humble Request to Ministers
 and Vestries, that they will take care that
 fit and worthy persons be put into the
 Office of Parish-Clerks; for that the de-
 fects of the people in performing their
 part of this Service, is chiefly imputable
 to this cause, that they have not a Clerk
 that is able to lead them in the right way
 of that performance: for if the people
 would but consider, that it is the special
 work of a Clerk to be their guide in what
 they are to say and do in this Service, and
 make such observation of him as they
 ought, he standing so advantageously for
 the same, would bring the whole Congre-
 gation unto a good performance. Some
 persons that may offer themselves, and it
 may be the Parishes interest to chuse, may
 have such natural defects, that they can
 never be made fit for the place; and some
 are of such a profane Spirit, that they will
 never set themselves to study to do their
 best therein. Both these are to be reject-
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ed, whatever advantages the Parish may make by their election : for so sacred a thing as the Worship and Service of Almighty God , is not to be subjugated to the secular interests of men : And it is a great reproach to any Parish, that to save themselves a little charge in maintaining a poor Family , they should employ a person to be guide to the people in this most solemn Office of Divine Worship, that is in any way a scandal or dishonour thereunto, or unfit to perform it as he ought. And if any such be already in the place, my request is, that the Minister and Vestry will use their Authority to reform them, and engage them to study the most decent and graceful manner of performance; and if that cannot be effected, to force them to admit the help of another in that matter, though they continue to do the Parish-business in other respects. I make this humble request, because I believe that a Clerk that was a devout man, and one that had a good command of his Voice, if he would set himself to study to excel in performing what is required of him, would greatly assist the people in the well performance of their part, and excite them thereunto.

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Application

To the Clergy and to the People.

To the CLERGIE.

ANd now I most humbly beseech the Reverend Clergy of this Church, that they will not despise the advice of so unworthy a person. If there be not *Truth* in what I write, I desire not to be regarded; but if there be, *Truth* is a thing so Divine and Excellent, as not for my unworthinels, or for any defects in the delivery, to be rejected; especially, when it is Truth of the highest concern that can be imagined; that which concerns (and that most immediately) the glory and honour of the most High God, and his Son Jesus Christ our most holy Saviour; that which concerns the supream good of the best of earthly Creatures, and that with relation to his better part, and his Eternal State; that which

which much concerns the happiness and well-fare of this Flourishing Church, and tends to its Unity, Sanctity, and Glory: That which concerns the discharge of your Great Duty to God and his Church, and is the best Return of the Benefits you partake from both; I say, when it is *Truth* of such concern, methinks it should be consider'd, and that whoever it come from as the Instrument, since God himself must be acknowledged the Author.

The Worship and Service of God hath been esteemed of all Wise Men, the chief of those things wherein Men or Angels could imploy themselves; 'Tis the Principal End of bringing men into Holy Orders, and of instituting Christian Assemblies, the Greatest Means of inducing that Super-excellent Principle of the Divine Life; that Evangelical Spirit which only can overcome our Vices, and sublime Moral Vertues into Christian Graces, and make our Good Works Seeds of Eternal Glory. 'This is the Prelibation of and Preparation for the unspeakable Joys above: 'Tis this for which all our Noble Faculties were given us: 'Tis this that chiefly distinguisheth us from Beasts, and that more than the meer Shape of our Bodies, or our

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Natural Reason, and gives us the greatest Likeness unto and Communion with the Angels. 'Tis the Worship of One God that is the greatest Incentive to Love, and the strongest Bond of Peace among Men, and among Christians it becomes more so, when we Worship Him in and through One Mediator and Saviour our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Natural Worship which was offer'd in the State of Innocency, the Superstitious Worship of Guilty and Affrighted Criminals, the Typical and Pedægogical Worship of Mosaical Institution, all these had something of Excellency in them, nay, were the best thing the world had besides: But the Excellency and Glory of Evangelical Worship is above them all, it far exceeds whatever else we can do in this Life, and is the Highest Felicity of the Life to come; Angels began it here on Earth, *Luke 2. 13, 14* and shall rejoice to accompany us therein when we are in Heaven. A Man that hath the Power of Godliness in his Soul, is apt to say when he is at Church, as the Disciples when they were on the Holy Mount, *Lord it is good for us to be here, or as David, Blessed are they that dwell in thy House and are ever praising thee.* These

These Things I have touched, that I might introduce this great Consideration, *That the most Learned and highly Dignified of the Clergy ought not to think it any abasement of themselves, but their great Honour to Read Common Prayer:* 'Tis not (as some would perswade us) the easiness of the Thing that can make it contemptible: There was no great difficulty in that which God requir'd of the Priests in the Services of the Temple, yet was their Office esteemed no small Honour; the reason whereof was, because they approached nigh to God in the Offices of his Solemn Worship: for as the Greatness of Gods Majesty requires that not every one that can do the Thing be admitted to perform it as an Act of his Solemn Worship, but that it be done by Persons Solemnly set apart thereunto; so the Consecration which men receive unto this Office, gives them the chiefest Dignity and Honour, that is to be found among Mankind; and all Nations ever had their Priests in highest Esteem (however they are scorned in this prophane age.) But then if their approach to God in the Offices of his Worship, which puts this Great Honour upon them becomes contemptible in their eyes, and they think scorn

of all but Preaching, I think they greatly err.

And when (through Bodily Infirmary or the Attendance on other Parts of their Ministry) they are obliged to imploy Readers, I think for the same reason, that they ought to take care they get such as (at least) do not scandalize that Service either by their wicked Lives or undecent Performance. To Perform the Publick Service of God in the Assemblies of his Servants, is too great an honour to be put on Fools or Vile Persons: Certainly something very considerable must be pleaded in excuse of those who professing a great Zeal for Holiness in their Preaching, are careless whether the Prayers be read well or ill, and imploy such to read them that are a dishonour to this Service. It cannot be sufficient to say that these Readers are Poor Men, and that they have no other way to live, and that they imploy them out of meer Charity: For that Charity to Men which is against the Love of God, and a Regard to the Solemnity of his Worship, is an ill sort of Charity: And so is that to particular persons which is against the Edification of the Church: Nay, I am of Opinion it is no Charity to those

those to whom it is shewed; for their ill Reading proceeding (for the most part) from their vicious lives, which hath destroyed in them that sense of God and Religion, which is the onely due preparation to a well performance of this Service (as I observed before) so long as they see that slubbering over the Service without that Seriousness and Devotion which their corrupt Affections cannot admit, and which for the reason fore-mentioned, they find it difficult to counterfeit; I say, whilst this will serve to get their living, they will not be so easily brought to Repentance, as if (being rejected of all on this account and brought to extream poverty) they were taught by the Rod to reflect on their folly, and to see the necessity of Amendment. Affliction is Gods way of teaching men to Repent, and I think men should not think to find any better. Therefore I wish that if Scholars will be prophane, they may know they must be poor; and none that have power would put them into imployment in the Church, or own them; but as they have nothing to do to take Gods Name into their mouths while they hate to be Reformed, and cast Gods Word behind their backs.

backs. So the Church will not suffer them so to do, especially when it is apparent they desire it for a Secular Advantage, and to maintain them in a Vicious Life, and not of any desire to Serve God and his Church. And I earnestly pray that a stop may be put to the admission of such into the Ministry at the first, although I know 'tis extream difficult as things stand. And as our Church directs, so we have great need to pray at this time, *That God will so guide and govern the minds of the Bishops and Pastors of this Church, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, &c.* which Prayer, will I hope, offend none.

Some there are also that do it thus slightly out of Erroneous Principles or Carnal Wisdom, the first sort think the *Common Prayer* a grievous Imposition, and that they ought to be left to their liberty to Pray as they please; but because the Rulers will have it so, they submit to it onely to get their livings, or else for the sake of *Preaching*; which being of so great necessity to mens Salvation, they think it must not be forsaken, though they are forc'd to accompany it with a defective disorderly Form, (as they think ours is) and they hope their good intentions towards mens

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Salvation will excuse their using it, when they can do no better. But men thus minded will make what haste they can to rid themselves of what is burdensome, and so ramble over the Service without that Devotion it requires, and plainly shew by their careless manner of Reading that they do not love the *Common Prayer*, though they are forc'd to use it.

My Opinion is, that men of this temper, as well as the former, ought not to be encouraged neither by the Church nor the Ministers thereof, and that they need Repentance and Reformation to set them right in the Judgment of God and all Good Men; God will be Sanctified in all that come nigh him, by the most solemn decent and reverend Performance of the Offices of his Publick Worship; and this he can never be by men that are not fully perswaded in their own minds of the goodness and fitness of the mode in which that Worship is performed. For doubts in this will hinder such manner of speaking and deportment as becomes their approach to that God who is Glorious in Holiness, and Dreadful in his Praises. In that respect also, I think it may well be required by the Laws of this Church that

every one admitted to the Ministry thereof, declare publickly their Assent and Consent to all and every thing, &c. God himself doth require a full perswasion of mind concerning the goodness of that we do, especially in weighty matters; and tells us that whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin, and he that doubts is damned if he does that he doubts of; and therefore the Church cannot be blamed in this Order: for such Readers were better out of the Church then in it, for they scandalize the Excellent Service thereof, by their slight performance (and that far more than the prophane) for these seeming very devout in their own Prayers, People are apt to think their indevotion in the *Common Prayer*, declares that they believe it not to be the Worship of God, but something to be read on condition to have liberty to Preach, and so it is no matter how it be done; and 'tis these that incourage that offensive and indecent behaviour that I have observed in some, who though they are present at Prayers, yet never observe any thing that the Rubrick directs to be performed; but sit and loll and stare about, and endeavour as much as they can to seem unconcern'd in what is done, till the Minister

After goes into his Pulpit, for whose sake alone they came to Church, least they be thought to approve the Prayers: these I fear, take the conceit that they do well in this from observing the slowness of such Ministers in Reading the Prayers, or at least it prevents that conviction which these kind of men might receive from their devout and reverend performing the same. And I believe this, because in those Churches where the Minister is very devout in Reading the Service, I could never observe any such behaviour; so that either such people seldom come there, and I think (being like to give more scandal by their ill Example than they receive benefit by the Service) they were better be absent then present.) or else the power of a *Devout Performance* is such, that when men are present at it, they cannot but be *somewhat serious and inclin'd to imitation*. I humbly intreat therefore that if there be any that are imployed in the Ministry of this Church (as I have cause to fear there is) that Read ill on this account, that they will reflect on the indecency and ill consequences of such practices, and as a Remedy hereof, that they will consult the most learned and judicious that are devout in

the Way of our Church, for fuller Satisfaction in the Reasonableness and Excellency of our Service, that so they may Perform it more Reverently and Affectionately, to the Honour of God and the Peoples Edification; and this they will find to be more comfortable to themselves, and of better acceptance with all good men, then halting between Two Opinions; for it is evident, that were there any thing sinful in the performance, they ought not to have undertaken it at all; for Evil must not be done that Good may come: But if there be onely a defect of some degrees of Goodness in this Service, then Reason requires that they do not make it worse by an ill performance, but make the best of it that possibly can be for obtaining the ends thereof, *viz.* Gods Honour, and our Spiritual Consolation. Yet those that Read ill on the account of such Error, are more to be pitied and less condemned than those that do so out of a kind of Carnal Wisdom; yet such there are, and they are those who out of fear of Change are unwilling to seem Zealous and Devout in that which is condemned by a great Party of Men, especially if they be not unlike to be uppermost, and
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when they can stand as fair for Preferment in the present state of things, in such kind of indevotion as the most zealous; there may be many temptations of this kind among a People consisting of Parties, that bear an equal or near an equal Balance, and therefore the Consideration is not to be despised. Men are apt to think they may serve God and Mammon, but it cannot be; 'tis true we may become all things to all men that we may win some, but in this they rather win us; if it may be called a winning, when fear that a Party may prevail, makes us indevout in what we own for the Worship of God; and that we shall never win them from their Errors by such compliance is plain: for that the reason of all mankind must agree that men may not serve their own Carnal Interests to the prejudice of that Worship whereby God is most eminently Served and Honoured in the World: And whilst these men acknowledg our Liturgy to be such, none can approve their indevout performance, for fear of being esteemed High Church Men, and of losing interest in that they call the Moderate Party; nor will any of that Party ever be brought from the admiration of the *Ex tempore* Way

Way by such kind of politique Readers. And I believe these men do also mistake their own Interests, I mean even in things Temporal; for the Pious of every Party do best like in all an hearty Zeal in the Way of Worship they use, and abhor such vile men as prefer their own Interest before Gods Honour. And now if Times should change, so that a man formerly Zealous in the Way of the Church of *England*, should see Cause to use any other that may be Established, I believe he would have as kind Reception among such as any that were afraid to be esteemed zealous for the *Common Prayer*, and they would be more apt to glory in bringing one such to their way than in the Conformity of many temporizers. And for those that are like themselves, and in all ways of Religion make Gain their Godliness, and onely follow Christ for the Loaves and Fishes, if they happen to have the Sway, they are for shutting out as many as they can, on any pretence, from sharing in the Benefits of the Church Order they are of, and think *the fewer the better chear*, and they will find some way or other to exclude from preferment those that fared well in the times that were ill with them, whether they were zealous

lous or not, by such terms of Communion as they shall very hardly comply with: or lastly, if they have a Latitude beyond their reach in that kind, as we must conclude them Men of profligate Consciences, so it is ten to one but want of the fear of God will betray them to some vices that will spoil the comfort of all their worldly enjoyments, and make them less happy then the greatest sufferers for Nonconformity can be: or if Carnal Wisdom should so discern the inconsistency of such vices with this worldly happiness, as on that account they avoid them, yet the loss of the endless Joys of Heaven will detect the folly of such sinful indifference and carnal compliances.

I fear these kind of men will but deride me for all this, and be more hardly persuaded to be truly zealous and devout Readers than either the Profane or Erroneous, because they have less sense of the things of another Life and what relates thereunto, then either of them. Concerning the later there is no question, and of the former not much; for the cares of the World and deceitfulness of Riches, are before the Pleasures of other things, in choaking the heavenly Seed (*viz.*) The Doctrine

Strive of Eternal Life. For though Sen-
 sual Pleasures are of another Nature and
 have other Objects than Spiritual, and are
 therefore called *the Pleasures of other*
Things, and upon that account must needs
 discompose the Mind and make it unfit to
 conceive the Delights and Pleasure of
 Communion with God and his Saints in
 these Holy Exercises, yet because we are
 many times incapable of such Pleasures,
 and satiety oft turns to loathing, especially
 for a time, and helps men to see the vanity
 thereof; so that they may be disposed by
 good counsel at such a time, to turn them-
 selves to seek Pleasures always Savory and
 Everlasting. But now these Lusts of the
 World (that is Covetousness of Worldly
 Riches) as they are more insatiable than
 those of the Flesh, so they have scarce a-
 ny recesses: they follow us into our Clo-
 sets, and to Church; accompany us when
 Sicknes shuts us into our Chamber; and
 even on our very Death-beds; and nothing
 but the utter destruction of our Faculties
 can eradicate this Love of Money: These
 Lusts give us no time or composure for
 the Hearty and Zealous Service of God,
 but tho our Bodies be present, our Minds
 being agitated with thoughts about the
 World,

World, can intend nothing as they ought, that is done to the Honour of the Almighty and their Souls Health. Therefore Men of this Temper can very hardly be good Readers till they be converted; and their Conversion is so difficult as our Saviour hath taught, *Matth. 19. 24.* that it can scarce be hoped; there remains therefore, but this way to make them Read well, as to the profit of the People, That it become the Interest of their Profit and and Worldly Advantage so to do, because they can no other ways find Entertainment into that Office by those that imploy Readers: and this will make them Study it; and it may be, Do it as well to the Peoples Edification (though not to their own Acceptance with God) as the most Pious Men.

But on what Account soever it is that Men Read well, my humble request is, That those who Imploy Readers, will be sure they do so before they Admit them to the Place, and not suffer themselves by any Importunity, Interest, Relation, or any other thing, to be drawn to Accept an ill Reader, to the dishonour of this Service whereby we Glorify God, and in which we enjoy the Highest and most Heavenly Delights

Delights in our own Minds and Spirits.

But for all this, I cannot expect that such should be obtained among those that offer themselves for Readers, as will not need the Instruction, Incouragement, and good Examples of the Ministers to which they belong: And therefore my humble request unto them is farther, That their greatest Dignities, Riches, or pretence of Busines or Bodily Infirmary, or their reserving themselves for long and earnest Preaching (which I fear, God will not bless, when set up to the contempt of the Prayers) may not hinder them from Reading sometimes themselves, according to the good Orders of our Church, which they are many ways obliged to observe, and the more, for that they receive a large share of the Dignities and Benefits thereof, but that once a Month at the least, they do most Devoutly and Solemnly Read the Service of the Church in their own Persons: that thereby the Readers may see they have a great love for the same, and be excited to do their Part the better in imitation of their Masters. For certainly there is nothing will be so prevalent as the Example of those on whom they have so great dependance (and a sense that they shall please
and

and oblige them) to make Readers more studious and industrious to do their Duty. And to this I also beseech them to add one thing more, as that which will be of great avail to beget a reverence and good esteem for our Prayers in the minds of the People, and draw them to attend more Constantly and Devoutly upon them; and that is, That the Ministers of the Parishes will never omit (but when constrained thereunto) to be themselves present at the Prayers, when ever they are read in their own Churches: And also that here in this City, where Churches are very near (in some of which Prayers are read twice a day, and in some once) that all the Neighbour Ministers will come as often as they can possible, to such Prayers. It hath been a great grief and offence to some good Men, as I have heard them complain, that they see so few Ministers at the daily Prayers at *St. Christophers*; a Church that stands most advantageously, to give Example and Influence to the City and Kingdom; where Prayers are read twice every day: and the Example of a devout Attendance and good Performance of Eminent Ministers of our Church in that Place, would for ought I know, Influence the whole Nation unto a greater

greater Reverence for the Publick Worship according to this Order. Others I have heard complain of the Ministers retiring into the Vestry all the time of Divine Service, as if they came to Church to Study and not to Worship, and were not as much concerned in the Common Prayers of the Church as the people. I know not what their plea may be in this case, but I have not been able by my own wit to excuse them to those that have blamed them for it: But the worst complaint of all hath been against some, who will sit in a Coffee House before a Lecture, till Prayers be almost done, and rather let their Company be wanting to the Solemnity of God's Holy Worship, than leave a Pipe of Tobacco before it be smoak'd out, or not take their usual Dose of Tea or Coffee: I confess I have been much troubled to hear of it, and am more so to mention it, especially thus publicly, if the thing were not notorious, and in no way that I know of, I can assist the Reformation of it so well as in this, which I hope will plead my excuse with all good Men.

I know Ministers may be many ways hindered sometimes, from attendance at daily Prayers, and I am against those that are so censori-

censorious in imputing their omission to ill
 causes; no man desires to preserve a greater
 Reverence and Respect for the Clergy of
 our Church than my self, but yet I can-
 not excuse them wholly in this matter,
 and therefore I humbly beg that it may
 not be reckoned any sign of dis-respect
 that in my Zeal for the Service of God I
 have proceeded thus far, since I believe the
 good or ill State of this Church depends
 much on the Esteem or Contempt that is
 had of its Publiek Service of God, and
 the Good Order appointed for the same,
 and the Love and Reverence of the Mi-
 nisters towards it, or their Neglect or
 Contempt of it, will very much influence
 the Minds of the People.

I have but one thing more to beg of
 them, which I must crave leave to press
 with some earnestness: which is this,

That in their Sermons they frequently
 inculcate the Duty of being constant and
 devout in attending the Common Prayer,
 and that they prove to their People, That
 it is not only possible, but much more
 easie, to be devout in the use of Forms of
 Prayer, than in the *Extempore* Way:
 Methinks when Papists out of a Malicious
 Design to divide us, that they may destroy

us,

us, and Separatists from Mistakes of Scripture and Experience, cry up the way of *Ex tempore* Prayer in opposition to the Publick Liturgy, and to the distracting mens minds and dividing the Church, I say, surely then the Ministers of our Church should not think themselves unconcerned about the Esteem their People have thereof, and their Devotion in the use of it. But since they that are against us on both sides, are so earnest in defending their own ways and reproaching us, the Ministers should not be remiss in counter-working such ill designs by the most Rational and Convincing Preaching joined with Fervency and Importunity of Perswasion.

And here I must first observe, That general Exhortations to Piety and Holiness, how Excellently and Passionately so ever delivered, tho they may make Men admired and followed, and that by men of several Perswasions, yet they will not have the good effect they should, if mens minds be corrupted with false Notions, especially about the exercising and expressing of Piety and Holiness: But as the best Food may do Men hurt by reason of ill Humors in the Stomach; so may such
good

good Doctrine through ill Principles in the Understanding. Such as think the best way to be holy is to Consecrate themselves in the Blood of Heretiques, or of such as will not let Christ rule over them (as the Levites were by *Moses* commanded to Consecrate themselves, every Man on his Son and on his Brother that had committed Idolatry in worshipping the Calf) and such as think the way of holiness lies in distinction of Words and Phrase, and in their Garb and Garments, or in strictness in some Indifferent and Apocriphal Observances not enjoined by God nor the Church: Nay, if they think it lies in being above Ordinances and rejecting both Sacraments, in railing at Gods Ministers and censuring all their Neighbours that are not of their Sect, counting us all Ignoramus's and Persecutors, or, (which is most my Subject) in condemning all Forms of Prayer, and all Superiority among Ministers as Popish and Anti-christian, and applauding Independency as the only Scriptural Church Government, and the *Ex tempore* Way as the only Acceptable Mode of Worship (and that in publick as well as private) I say, all these and whatever other of like kinds (of which there are abundance

abundance in the World) when they hear the most Powerful and Passionate Exhortations to Piety in general terms, they make the Application to Zeal in their own Way: Wherefore I think those Ministers that do truly believe that a Sincere and Diligent Improvement of the Order of our Church to the Excercise of the most Fervent Devotion towards God, and most Affectionate Communion of Saints in Holy Worship, and to the Sanctification of our Hearts and Lives, is the True Way of Piety and Holiness, and to be preferr'd before all other Ways wherein Men pride themselves: I say, those Ministers that believe this (as all of the Church of *England*, and especially those that are Interest-ed in its Government, I hope will do) should not think it enough to preach up Piety in general, but make such particular Application to a Devout and Constant attendance on the *Common Prayer* as may prevent the abuse of their Sermons by men of ill Principles, and make them most serviceable to the Honour of God and Peace and Wellfare of this Church.

If we Observe the Sermons and Books of the Nonconformists on this Subject, it will appear that all their Discourses of Piety have

have always a secret (and very frequently an open) Relation to the Exercise thereof, in their own way, and very bad Reflections on ours (as being but a kind of pageantry and ostentation of Devotion, and meer formality and outside) without that life and power which makes it acceptable to God, and an evidence that we are truly Regenerate and his Elect People, and this is that which confirms their Disciples in their own way, and hinders them from so much as trying ours. And shall the Ministers of our Church be out-done by these they account Schismatics: Doth not the Orders and Solomnity of the Church deserve as much zeal as the novel ways cried up with them? Is not the Honour of God and Salvation of Mens Souls as much concerned in being devout in our way as in theirs? Why should not a great love to the *Common Prayer*, and a desire to attend constantly on the Office thereof in publick places, be as good a sign of true Grace as the love of *Extempore Prayer* in private, or a delight in going frequently to private Meetings, and the neglect of Gods Worship in our way (especially by those that profess to approve the Order we have for it) be counted a sign of the

the deadly state of carnal mindedness and unregenerateness, from which men must be converted, except they will be damned, as well as the neglect thereof in their way (even though men do not approve it, and be pious in ways that differ from theirs.) All men know that no Way or Mode of Religion is so good that men should be thought good Christians meerly for being Educated therein, and Professing to approve the same: but their Education and Profession will aggravate their sin if they be not serious in that Way of Religion, and so will the Excellency and Goodness thereof: And should not the Ministers of God, that have care of Mens Souls, who must bear the blame for ever if God be dishonoured, or Souls damned through their default; should not they Consider this, and perswade men to a greater love to God and to his Worship in the Way of this Church? And to Order their Concerns with Relation thereunto, so that they may approve themselves truly Converted and such as shall be Saved. 'Tis Seriousness in Religion that speaks Men true Christians, and this joined with Constant Attendance on Religious Duties (which is the fruit thereof) is their security against Apostacy,

postacy of all kinds, and I must say this, that however there may be, and I am confident are, some of all the different Ways of Religious Worship that are truly Converted and shall be Saved; yet none that I have known are better Christians than they who are Serious and truly Devout in the Way of the Church of *England*: I know there are many Hypocrites that seem so and are not, amongst us as well as others, but I speak of the Sincere. And if it be so, sure Ministers should think it their Glory and Joy when they can bring men from a Carnal and Unregenerate State, to that which is truly Spiritual and Gracious. It hath been some grief to me to see that Ministers on both extremes should out-do ours in this matter; those of the Papists seem to exult, not only when they can bring one of our Religion over to their Church, but when any of their own turn from a Worldly Secular Life, to that which they call Religious and Spiritual: And the Separatists not onely pretend to leave us upon the account of forsaking the World and devoting themselves to God, but to set up their Meetings on purpose to call others to a more Spiritual Life in communion with them,

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and

and rejoyce greatly in their success therein; and in nothing do they more glory over us than in out-doing us in Seriousness and Intention in the Matters of Religion, And should we give them cause so to do?

It seems to me, in very deed, there is too great cause of the same Complaint in Christian States (where Men are Christians by their Birth-right) as was in that of the Jews under the Law, *That there is none that understandeth and seeketh after God*, and much more then was in the Apostles times (where men chose Christianity though accompanied with reproaches and persecutions) when yet it is said, *That all minded their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ: The Worship and Honour of God and our Saviour, is not so dear to men as their Secular Advantages.* Men do not believe or consider that it is of necessity to their Salvation to love God above all, to do all that ever they do with a greater relation to his Honour than to their own Carnal Advantages; and that the careless in neglect of these Holy Offices, when they might order it so as to have time to attend them, gives great suspicion they live to themselves and not
to

to God, and are yet but Carnally Minded and in a State of Spiritual Death. Methinks therefore, those who have Care of Mens Souls should be Jealous over them, lest that all their Labour should be in vain, whilst men continue thus under their Ministry, and be in Travel as Women with Child, for their Regeneration. 'Tis certainly a woful sign when Ministers have no greater Concern than to get Money and to make the best of his Living, and little regard whether his People be pious or profane: God complains heavily of this in many places of Scripture. And it were easie to declaim against it in many words if it were not sufficiently done by others, and also so evident in it self, that no Minister that will but think on't, can be ignorant of the great sinfulness of such a Temper; and that as the Wrath of God and multiplied Curses of Souls damned by their neglect, await them in the World to come, so they are the grief of good men, and the scorn of bad ones in this World. They cannot but know that it is they that make Men Separatists, while no Man that hath any Concern for his Soul, can indure to live under a Minister that regards the Souls of his People not

half so much as he doth the Life of his Beasts: And I wonder they can blame any Man for encouraging their suspension, since they charge on true Christians, who had rather see so many Souls damned, as may be in danger of it by such mens neglect, then that they should be displeased by a just Suspension that a better may take their Place. For my part I wish all Parishioners were convinced of their Duty in this kind, and would endeavour all that is possible in just ways, to remove such Ministers: And those that are most offended at this, should labour in this before they think of separating from the Church, and those that have not thought of this, which was the right way to ease their grief, but run into the wrong way of Separation; let them now return at the earnest Invitation of this Church by her best Ministers, and when they have resolved to do their Duty to God, to the Church and their Ministers, according as the Law requires, let them in Gods Name, see that their Ministers do theirs too, in taking care of the Souls of their People, and performing what the Law of God and the Church requires of them; and if by humble Intreaties, and a pious Example and due Attend-

Attendance for their Reformation, they cannot prevail with them, they ought to complain to the Bishop of the Diocesses, to endeavour their Suspension, and that more Faithful ones may be Intrusted with the Cure of their Souls: And it seems a great Argument to perswade all Nonconformists that are truly Pious to return to the Communion of our Church, and to endeavour to approve themselves Devout and Pious in the Offices of Gods Worship administred therein, that by so doing they may be greatly helpful to the Reformation of things amiss, to the encouraging the good and removing unworthy Ministers, to the honour of our Religion, and Salvation of mens Souls: And I believe there be many Pious Bishops in this Church that would be glad to have such just proof of the misdemeanors and neglects of their Clergy, as might enable them to remove such as deserve it, and put into Employment those that are able and willing to do better, and there are many such to my knowledge, who can have no Employment in the Church, while these naughty Persons by the favour of careless and profane Patrons, get into good Livings: And I look on it as none of the least mischiefs of

Separation, that thereby those that should be Instruments of Reforming the Parochial Churches by Example, Admonition, and Assisting the Exercise of Discipline, (which cannot take place through the prevalency of prophaness, and majority of evil men) forsake them and leave Ministers and People to perish together, at least for any thing they will do to help them. 'Tis not enough for such to rail against ill Ministers and corrupt Communion; for if it be found that through their unjust forsaking the Church to join in Separate Societies, it comes to pass that evil men cannot be expell'd as they ought, their professed detestation of such will not excuse them, but aggravates their guilt: But this Subject hath been sufficiently Handled by others, I onely thought fit to mention it at this Season.

But as I have thus expressed my Dislike of those Ministers that are Negligent in a Charge of such Infinite and Eternal Concernment; so I cannot but declare my great Respect for such as are Diligent and Faithful: and many such there are God be thanked, in the City and Kingdom, however some Nonconformists have reported them so few that they are next to none.

And

And I do heartily congratulate the happy success of such Ministers; such, who in Conscience of their Assent and Consent to the Orders of this Church, have taken upon them the constant daily Reading of the *Common Prayer* in their Parish Churches, and that do frequently Administer the Lords Supper therein; that do not make the backwardness of their People to come to Prayers and the Sacrament, a pretence for their own neglect (when they never tried how forward they would be if they had opportunity and good instruction) but set themselves to do their part (in waiting on the Ministries to which they are called) and to perswade the People to do theirs, and to begg Gods Blessing on their endeavours: In this way they have found success beyond their expectation, the numbers of those that have attended the Prayers and Sacrament being much greater than what slothful Ministers do ordinarily suggest to be likely; and their own comfort and satisfaction in performing their Duty, and their delight in the good Success of it, being far beyond that of the negligent in their carnal ease and sensual pleasures. And I have great hopes that if other Ministers would fol-

low their good Example (especially at this time) it would be a means to restore the Unity, Peace and Glory, of this Famous Church; and to prevent the Confusions and Troubles we are afraid of; and to establish us on such sure Foundations, that the Gates of Hell, the Subtilest Counsels of the Jesuits, and Bannings of all sorts of Fanatiques, shall not be able to destroy us; or alter the Excellent Constitution of this well settled Church. And I most humbly beseech those Ministers, that by their Pious and Unblamable Lives and Excellent Preaching, have obtained a great Reputation among the People, and a potent Interest in their Affections, that they will now shew themselves hearty Friends to this Church, and be very Devout and Serious in Performing the Offices of God's Publick Worship according to the Prescription thereof, and Zealous in perswading the People to attend the same, that now the inforcement of the Laws brings many Dissenters to Church, who formerly never came there, we may shew them the practice of our Publick Devotion in its own Beauty and Excellency; and this would be more effectual to their through Conversion to the Union and Com-

Communion of our Church than any Disputes or elaborate Discourses. And I also beseech those Ministers that are most Strict Observers of the External Part of the Rubrick, and most Zealous Assertors of the Lawfulness and Excellency of all things in our Church Order, that they will also shew themselves as Zealous Practisers of the Internal Part, *viz.* Of that Devotion that is agreeable thereto; and lead a Life in other things that may adorn the Order of this Church, and allure Dissenters into the Communion thereof: And I believe this would do much more good than reproaching them with their former Miscarriages, and putting a harsh interpretation on their present Compliances; than exulting in the execution of the Laws, and using bitter invectives in Sermons or Discourses, against them. I would not be thought to discourage any in what is truly their Duty, or to oppose the Design of our Governours in their present enforcement of the Laws of the Land: as I believe, they design onely the bringing the Nonconformists to a sober and serious Consideration of their Duty, and a faithful and impartial Enquiry after Satisfaction in such things as they scruple.

That we may all Unite in the Solemn Worship of that God who is pleased when his House is filled, and bids that men be constrained to come in. That we may Live in Christian Charity and keep the Bond of Peace (now much loosened by our different Orders and distinct Communion.) That we may Join together to Oppose the Popish Designs (which are much furthered by our Divisions) Finally, That we may provoke one another to Love, Honour, and Obey our Superiours, and to Incourage their Government by most ready and free Assistance; and may lay aside all unjust, suspicious and froward oppositions, whereby they may be provoked: that that so at last there may be no other strife, but whether the Prudence and Sweetness of their Government, or the Humility and Reverence of our Obedience, shall be the greater.

And although the Penalties which the Laws inflict on Dissenters seem severe, yet since the Execution thereof is committed to a most Merciful Prince, furnished with the Advice and Counsel of most Pious, Prudent and Moderate Bishops, and by his Prerogative Royal he may make such Relaxations and Moderations

tions therein as the Circumstances of Persons and Things require, I cannot think it my duty or any mans else, to discourage any man (especially the Ministers, as now oblidge) in presenting such as do not Communicate in our Publick Worship, especially in the Blessed Sacrament. And I cannot but observe this in our Excellent Constitution, That as the Severity of the Laws against those that Factiously Dissent from the Publick Order, and affront the Wisdom of Law-makers, by setting up their Self-chosen Ways against that they prescribe: I say, as this doth secure the Peace of the Kingdom as well as it can be; so their allowing to the King his Prerogative Royal and Supream Headship in Ecclesiastical Affairs, provides better for what Toleration and Connivance is needful towards Peaceable Consciencious Dissentors, than any of the Models in which some men have taken so great pains to direct the Parliament what Laws to make: but all this on the by.

I know some will think me over Zealous, and that it were better to encourage Ministers in their Compliance with the Nonconformists; their Connivance at their Meetings and their breach of Order,
and

and neglect of their Duty in coming to the Sacrament; in pleasing them by omitting many things, &c. But although I honour Piety in all, and would please my Neighbour for his good to Edification, yet I do not think we are bound to remit any thing of our Duty to God and our Governours for that Reason; neither do I think that Edification lies in being humored in that kind, I am sure the Peace of the Church doth not: Hear what Mr. *Baxter* writes on this Subject, and I doubt not it will be better taken from him than from me. *Cure* pag. 392.

“ The Pastors who will preserve the
 “ Churches must not be so tender of pre-
 “ serving their Interest in the *Religious*
 “ *Persons of their Charge* (such as Parish-
 “ oners to their own Ministers) as to de-
 “ part from Sober Principles and Ways,
 “ (such as those in the Church of *England*
 “ are in our Judgments) to please them, &c.
 and a little farther, “ This pleasing men
 “ is not the Way of Peace, it may prove
 “ a Palliate Cure for the present, but pre-
 “ pareth for after Troubles and Confu-
 “ sions. — for the weakness which crieth
 “ one Error to day may cry up more to
 “ morrow (and 'tis so in crying down
 one

"one thing in our Service) and if you
 "will please them, then you must follow
 "them, except you repent; and then you
 "might at much cheaper rates have for-
 "sook them just where they forsook the
 "*Way of Truth and Peace (such is the ob-
 servance of the Order of our Church.)*

For though Mens Humours, and Cor-
 rupt Affections, and Erroneous Conceits
 may be gratified hereby; yet their Reason
 and Conscience is not: When men consi-
 der it seriously, that the Minister doth a-
 gainst the Laws and Orders made with
 greatest Advice of Church and State; a-
 gainst the Publick and Solemn Declaration
 of his Assent thereunto, and Consent to
 Practise accordingly; against his Solemn
 Promise at his Ordination, and also by
 Subscriptions; and against the Unity and
 Peace of the Church: I say, when they
 consider this, they cannot in their Reason
 and Conscience approve the Omissions,
 Alterations or Additions which some take
 liberty to make in the Matters of God's
 Worship prescribed by the Rubrick. For
 the violation of such Obligations in Sacred
 Things (tho seemingly small) carries in
 it the appearance of contempt of God
 and his Church: God looks we should be
 Just

Just and Faithful to our Promises in small things as well as great, and if it were lawful for them to Promise, it is necessary for them to be careful to Perform: It is not haste of Business or any kind of avocation (that can otherwise be supplied) that can excuse the curtailing of the Service; nothing but what a Man may justly think the Church would have allowed for an excuse if she had fore-seen it, or in equity would dispense with her Laws for, can discharge the Conscience from the Obligation of this Promise at any time. Therefore if any one to please his own private fancy, or to gratify others, leaves out or puts in, or alters any thing of the Service, I cannot think but he sins against God, and I am sure he gives offence to many that have a Reverence for the Orders of the Church, and scandal to those that have not; and encourages others to reject and disobey them in greater matters. But that which is worst of all, is, that it divides the Ministry and the Church: Some are counted Moderate Men and Friends to Nonconformists and Dissentors, whilst other, hat believe these to be Schismatiques, and the Church to have given them no cause of displeasure, and therefore

fore strictly observe the Orders of the Church, and seek to bring the Dissentors to Repentance and a return to their Duty, they are branded as Popishly Affected, Persecutors and High Church Men, are many ways rendered contemptible to the Vulgar. It seems to me a thing much to be desired, that Ministers would agree to be Uniform in their Practice in these Matters; and that they would all thoroughly study the Rubrick, and agree together in what cases they may be excused from the strict observances of such things which many constantly omit and others very often, and let the People know it; that we may not think it proceeds from condemning themselves of doing amiss in their promises to observe all and every thing, from differences of Judgment about the lawfulness of such Things, or the contempt of Publick Order; and in what cases we may expect it and in what not: And I think if the Ministers of the Cities did begin this Agreement, it might give great Satisfaction and good Example to the Country. I have heard some Country Ministers (that are for Strict Obedience) complain of the defects of some Eminent Persons in this City in this matter of following the Directions.

of

of the Rubrick , and that they have found by Discourse with them, that it hath been caused through ignorance thereof, that they had never throughly Read it. Certainly this is a great reproach, and should be considered ; and since the chief strength of this Church consists in the respect which is given by its Ministers (especially those that should be Examples to the rest) to the Rules and Orders thereof , and their Unity and good Agreement in observing the same ; I hope this Advice will not be despised , and I am sure this will make much for the Agreement of the People, who are much distracted and divided by the different Practices (as well as Judgements) of the Conforming Ministers , and would be more disposed to seek a general Satisfaction in all things that concern their duty in conforming to the Orders of the Church , if their Scruples were not too much Justified by these Irregularities ; and they would be a thousand times more like to be Reformed and brought into good Order by the Methods prescribed by the Laws of Church and State , if they had not this to say for themselves , That , those who Prosecute them for breaking the Laws , make but
little

little Conscience of keeping them themselves, or suffer others (that profess to believe all things good and lawful that are ordered) to walk disorderly, not observing the Law, but through breaking it, to dishonour the Wisdom of Church and State as much as they do : whereas they obey not, because they fear to dishonour God and offend against the Dictates of their own Consciences, and would swear (as I have heard many say) that it is not to serve any Interest, but out of pure Conscience they Conform not (although I fear, they have not used due ways of Satisfaction.) Now it is mighty hard to give them a Reason why such Men should be indulged in their disobedience, and they punished. I confess could we say that these Men prosecute the End of the Law, which is the Edification of the Church, and the Peace and Prosperity of the State, and Unity and Charity in each Mans Parish; in which Cases some things at some times, may be dispenced with; (and a man may be sure the Law-makers meant they should:) or could we say it were like to win the Scrupulous Dissentors, that these men pass over many things that the Church enjoyns, and do some she allows

allows not for their sakes ; we might say somewhat to purpose to silence this complaint , but it is hard to prove either, (when so many Worthy Persons of this Church have written so much to the contrary, and Twenty Years Experience disproves it ;) therefore the best way to bring Nonconformists to Reverence and Obey the Publick Order, and to promote Peace, Amity and Edification , is , For these that are called Conformidable Ministers , to take care most strictly to observe the same Publick Order themselves , and to have frequent Conferences Personal and by Letters , for the effecting a general Agreement ; arming themselves therein : And I most humbly beseech the most Reverend the Arch-Bishops , and Right Reverend Bishops of this Church , to take the Matter into their Serious Thoughts , and Consider what Concern they have herein ; since the different usages of Ministers in Cathedrals and in Presence of the Bishop himself , gives great offence to some that hold the fore-mentioned Obligation of the Laws , and to a Uniformity in all things , and gives greatest strength to the Argument of the Dissentors against their being prosecuted for not observing them. There

There is one Thing I must particularly mention on this occasion, which the Rubrick most plainly orders, but is omitted even in most Cathedrals; (*viz.*) The Administring the Sacrament every Sunday, at the least in Cathedral Churches, and I mention it, because I believe the due performance thereof, and the preparations requisite to the same, would be a great means to reform the Manners of those that officiate in Choirs, and the Officers belonging thereunto, and of the Servants of the Bishops and the Chief of the Clergy, who ought frequently to attend the same (as well as the Priests and Deacons) and may be easily brought to it by the Authority of their Masters (and no doubt many Devout Persons in the City would come also) and this Solemnity, performed as it ought, I verily believe would be a means to restore much of the Primitive Devotions; which the Errors and Disputes of the late Times of Liberty and Licentiousness had almost utterly extinguished; and I believe also that the Zeal and Devotion of the Bishops and chief Ministers of this Church, in thus promoting Piety and Devotion, and endeavouring such a Reformation in the Place of their Residence
and

and among the Officers that depend most on them, would mightily convince the Dissentors of their Sincerity in Religion, and silence their scandalous reports of them, and induce a greater Reverence and Respect towards them among all the People. And I am apt to think the woful Contempt that is cast on the Clergy by the generality of the People, is permitted by Almighty God as a punishment for the so great neglect of his most Solemn Christian Office in that Place which should be an Example to all others, and would have a great Influence on them.

I Conclude this Discourse with my hearty Prayer to Almighty God that he will indue his Ministers with Righteousness, and make his Chosen People Joyful.

I shall now add to the People as I did to the Ministers, an earnest Exhortation, That they will seriously consider this Matter, and attend the performance of their Duty therein; that I may not lose all my labour in directing their Behaviour.

If Men will not dispose themselves to serious Consideration we were as good
talk

talk to men asleep, or to the dead; neither God hath made any promise, or can men have any hope that such shall ever be enlightened with the knowledge of the Truth, as will not open the Eyes of their Minds to receive it. The most Glorious Light of Spiritual and Eternal Life our Blessed Saviour, even he gives Light to none but those that will awaken themselves and arise from the dead; and what can it be hoped a Candle should do after the Sun? Men had formerly learnt to talk of spiritual drowiness and death, as if it were bound upon us by such a fatal necessity as must suppose all Exhortations to be vain; but I hope men have since been better taught; for neither the sin of our first Parents, nor our own faults, can so far constitute us Brutes, but that we may (if we will) *shew our selves Men*; and in nothing doth it more concern us so to do, than in Things most immediately relating to the Honour of God, and our Highest Felicity; for on this very Account he hath given us more Understanding than the Beasts of the Field, and made us capable of doing him Honour, and being thus happy: There are four Excercises of our Reason about Sensual Pleasures,

sures, but have their likeness in the Natural Sagacity and Instincts in Brutes; and in things of that Nature these seem to as much purpose as they; but in that we consider of God and Invisible Things, and perform Religious Worship in a fit and decent manner; this is the Priviledg of Mankind onely, and herein doth their Honour and Felicity chiefly consist. But alas, how do Men close their Eyes and harden their Hearts willfully, until they provoke God to do it judicially; and because they would not have the Light of Truth shine into their Minds, nor the Power thereof impress their Souls, God resolves they shall not: Oh woful Condition! When men say to God depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy Ways, and God saith to men depart from me, I will never own such Workers of Iniquity. And yet as woful as it is, it seems to me that there be but few that dread this. What other sense can be put on the Language of most Mens Lives and Conversations, but that they speak them Contemners of Gods gracious Presence in the Places where he puts his Name, (i. e.) which he calls his House, placeth his Residence there, and owns it for his Dwelling,

and

and from whence he confers his Blessings and Favours upon us, where we behold the Beauty of his Pleased Face when he lifts up the Light of his Countenance upon us in the Comfortable Promises of his Holy Gospel ; where we offer up our selves in Sacrifice unto him and sing his Praises, and powre out our Souls before him in Holy Desires, Humble Complaints, and Hearty Thanksgivings for his Mercy in the performance of these holy Offices wherein we Worship him ; for thus is God present in the place of Holy Assembly. In this Presence of God good Christians find a Fullness of Joy, and value it above the highest Injoyments of the World : But how few do approve themselves such by this Character ? Do not the most among us shew a great disregard to our Publick Prayers, and seem not to care whether ever there were any or not ? It may be, since the Law and the State of Things even forceth them to recede from their Worldly Employments and Carnal Divertisements on the Lords Day, they will desire that they may have a good Preacher that may then entertain them with good Language and quaint Notions to please their Ears (while they little regard

gard the Matter of his Sermon, but
 much less the Solemn Service of God
 performed by our Common Prayers, But
 whereas we have an Order most profitable
 and comfortable to pious minds (viz.) To
 have Publick Prayers daily, that those
 who are not hindered by necessary Provi-
 sions for Themselves and Family, or o-
 ther Works of Justice and Mercy, may
 constantly enjoy the Heavenly Delights
 of Gods House, in Christian Communi-
 on and Fellowship of the Spirit (which
 certainly are above any can be found else-
 where) and for a Freedom whereunto a
 plentiful Estate is more desirable than up-
 on any other account whatsoever: yet
 notwithstanding this, many of the Richest
 and most Leasurely Persons never take
 care that this Order be observed in their
 own Parish Churches; and when it is, will
 scarce ever come there, but make that
 which should give them the greatest Ad-
 vantage and Obligation to come, to be a
 Hindrance thereunto: I mean that Men
 make use of their Riches to run themselves
 into such vast Trades and troublesome
 Projects, whereby they are so incumbered
 with Cares and Labours, that they are
 less at leasure for Gods Service than the
 Poor

poor and indigent ; or else (if they incline more to pleasure than profit) they take no care to order their Carnal Diversions, that they may be no hindrance to the Service of God ; but make them more joyful and zealous therein (tho this they ought to do) but suffer these to ingross all their time and exhaust all the vigor and strength of their minds, that either they never come to Church at all (at least on week days) or if they do they are more ready to sleep than pray , and are far from taking such delight in these Spiritual Exercises as they find in Carnal Recreations : Nay, many I have observed that will stand altogether idle and unemployed (a thing that seems tedious to Nature it self) and yet will not divert themselves with going to Church ; and in this I have observed the Female Sex most guilty , who being not so subject to be incumbered with business as Men , and often wanting opportunity of Company, Sports and Pastimes, have nothing else to do ; and yet living near the Churches where Prayers are daily read, seldom or never come there : Now what less doth this signify then that such care not for God, nor think of their dependance upon him : let him be gone

if he will, and remove the Throne of his Glory to some other place, let him send his Ministers to them that have time and composure to hear them; they have other things to do, and study and cares of another nature, which they think sufficient excuse from hearkning to what God saith for their Spiritual Consolation and Instruction, from seeking his Blessing, or owning his Providence, or adoring his Holiness; they hope to do well enough without God, and practically say to him as *Herbert* expresseth it, *We know where we can better be, than to serve thee; or rather, as in the Prophet, We are Lords, we will not come to thee; What is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what profit shall we have if we call upon him? Therefore we desire not the knowledge of his Ways*: We will not trouble our heads with Considering how we may best Honour and Please him, give us Riches, Honours and Pleasures of the World, and take those of the other who will.

To such as these I would first speak (if it were possible to make them hear) I would but ask them, Whether if they were in place of the Almighty, they would bear to be so slighted? I know their pride

will help here to shew them their own folly. 'Tis impossible for such Men to think (if they would but think on't) but that God will right himself when thus slighted if he can, and much less possible to think he cannot: And will he that is God from Everlasting to Everlasting, that gave Being to all Things in his own Time, and brings them to nothing at his own Pleasure! be disappointed of the Honour for which he hath Made and still Governs this World? and that by such a worm as man; and not Vindicate the same? Will he not take that Glory by his just punishment, which they would not give in the Offices of Divine Worship? And can the Proudest Man in the World ever think to resist Omnipotency, or fly from Gods Omnipresence? If God should do no more but withdraw his Divine Influences, we and all the things we love and honour above him, perish together: And can Men hope God will attend such with his Supports and gracious Influences, that will not attend him with their Prayers and Praises? It may be these Men will say they do not believe Almighty God takes this for any affront, but rather esteems such zeal as I commend a work of Super-erogation.

But I dare say these Men will be of another Mind when Sickneſs or Sorrow make them Sober, and eſpecially when they approach to Death or Judgment: I never knew any that talked at this rate, but that one time or other have confeſſed, that ſuch words came not from their Reaſon or Conſcience, but from their Pride and Paſſion; and that they were forc'd to have a ſecret Reverence for Devout Men, and to Condemn themſelves for their neglect of God and his Service: Therefore I hope none will be diſcouraged by theſe ſilly ſcoffs, from attending the daily Prayers.

There is no Man that conſults his own Reaſon, or Gods Revelations, but muſt think Gods Honour is dearer to him than theſe Men ſpeak, and that we give it him more immediately in this way than any other; and that nothing can be really done for Gods Honour, if men be not careful to honour him in this; becauſe in this we give him greateſt honour; therefore the love of Publick Worſhip hath ever been eſteemed the firſt Principle of all that which may truly be called Religion. Thoſe who are recorded for the moſt Holy Men and Women in Scripture, have been

been the greatest lovers of Gods House ; and that upon this very account , That there his Honour dwelt and his Glory appeared. They were enamoured of his Beauty , they desired to be instructed by his Wisdom ; assisted and comforted by his Grace , and prepared for Heavenly Glory ; and this made them love the Place where they see and enjoy him to these great Purposes. Again, 'tis most evident to considering men , That it was the happiness of the State of Innocency, that Man had nothing else to do but to Worship and Praise his Maker ; (at least nothing that might divert him from it.) And that it shall be our chief Happiness in the State of Glory , to be freed from all Cumberfome Labours and Cares , and all Distracting Prosecutions and Carnal Pleasures ; and shall then continually attend Divine Offices , as that which is our onely perfect Bliss and Felicity : and therefore those that do not esteem themselves the more Happy for having a Recess from Worldly Business that they may more freely and frequently attend Divine Offices ; are under a great delusion : and those that do will shew it by their practice.

That God who made all things for himself, hath created and made us as his Church and People (in an especial manner) for his Glory (or as the Apostle) *For the praise of the Glory of his Grace, Eph. 1. (i. e.)* That we might shew forth his praises; And all Christian Assemblies are chiefly Constituted and Appointed for those Holy Offices wherein we do this, and therefore for Men to call themselves Christians and Members of such Assemblies, and despise Publick Worship for which they were made so, is a great affront to the Almighty and to his Church.

That the Church hath well appointed these daily Offices of Divine Worship it being agreeable to reason and the Divine Prescription to the Jews, and the Customs of the Wisest and most Civilliz'd of the Gentiles.

These Things, and much more that might be said of like nature, being so evident, I must believe these kind of Men, that think our daily attendance at Prayers is being Righteous over much, are not moved hereunto by any thing of Reason or Sober Consideration; but are wholly influenced by Pride or Covetousness, or other Canal Affections, which hinder

Under the Exercise of their Rational Faculties, and make them live more of the Animal than the Divine Life, (*i. e.*) more like Beasts than Men; and so long as they are such we must expect no other language from them; for the Carnal Mind (a Man that discourseth as a meer Animal) perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned; and therefore it will be in vain for me to say any more to them, then earnestly to desire them, *To pluck out the Beam that is in their own Eye, and then shall they see clearly to pluck out the Mote that is in their Brothers:* For no more is an extream in this matter (if any man be supposed to be guilty thereof) in comparison of their total neglect and contempt of God and his Publick Worship, and making a mock at those that constantly and devoutly attend it.

The Second Sort to whom I shall apply my self, and for whose sake I chiefly undertook this Work, is such as have a love for these holy Offices and daily frequent them; to whom my earnest Request is, That they will persist in the good way they have begun, attend to the best man-

ner of performance, and make all the rest of their lives answer to the devotion herein.

For the first of these, I doubt not but such who do understand the Grounds and Reasons upon which this Way of our Publick Service was first ordered, and have taken up this practice, not upon some Carnal or Secular Accounts (as may sometimes happen) but in a sense of their Duty to God and Man: I say, these will I hope easily and effectually comply with my desire, and save me the labour of Arguments,

The inward peace and satisfaction they will find in governing themselves in this matter by Reason and not by Fancy, and in following the Universal Custom and Usage of Christians for many Ages, and of most even in this, and not that of Heretiques and Schismaticques: in obeying the Orders of our own Church, made with the greatest Advice and by the most unbiased Persons of any in the World; and not Herding with Quakers, Fifth Monarchy-men, Anabaptists, and other turbulent Sects, that oppose the same and seek its Ruin; in finding all that was Good and Profitable, all that was Decent and Solemn,

Yemn, all that was truly Primitive or any way Praise Worthy in the Service of the Church of *Rome* (a Church which was once very Famous for Learning, Piety, and Stedfastness in the Faith) still retained in ours; and all that which Ignorance, Error, or the Corruption of Times, had introduced into that, in this purged out: I say the satisfaction they will find in considering the excellency of our Form of Divine Service, in this and such like respects, *Will prevent all inclinations to turn into other ways.*

And should they have any scruples suggested unto them by cunning Seducers, I dare say, if they will but do (what may be justly expected from men so educated and obliged) that is, Consult the Ministers of our Church, they will find the fullest satisfaction that they can desire.

Again, as these Considerations, so the good Effects of a Devout attending this Service, will perswade them to continue the same: The Exaltation of our Minds thereby, above the mean Concerns of this World, so that they shall not be influenced by the Revolutions and infinite Changes to which they are subject; the Confirmation of our Faith and Hope in

Gods Promises, and the inward Joy and Peace that results there-from; the Excitation of our Love to God, and the Exercising thereof in holy Adorations and cheerful Praises; the Increase of our Love to one another by holy Communion in such Sacred Offices: these and such like, which will be the effects of attending this Service, will inforce our delight therein, and our endeavours so to order it that we be not kept from the same. To which I may add some outward good Effects, such as,

1. The Preventing many Idle and sometimes, very Chargeable Clubs and Visits, from which this will both excuse and oblige us. 2. The inducing a Good Order into our Families: For the

contriving our Matters so as we may have leasure to attend Gods Service, will be the greatest help to such Order, and make much for peaceable Conversation therein, and for the good Success of our Affairs, of any that can be named. I cannot attend the Demonstration, but I am sure he that will try, shall find it true by Experience.

3. The Chearfulness induced into our Minds by our Communion in the Psalmody and Responses, and the use of our Voice in other parts of the Service; tends much

much to the health of our Bodies and the mending our Temper : For as silence feeds the Melancholy Humour (the worst that Mans Body is affected with , and of most pernicious influence on the Mind ,) so Speech , and especially in such heavenly Converse , doth much to dissolve and disperse the same , and preserves the Body healthful and lively , and the Mind in a sweet and pleasant Temper. I shall mention no more , I hope it may suffice to have touched these things in so short a Discourse to perswade a constant attendance on the Publick Prayers.

2dly. I shall say somewhat of endeavouring a right performance. A danger there is , in which even those are who do daily frequent the publick Offices of Religion , That they should not perform them as they ought , Mat. 23. 8. Education , Custom , and various Interests may have great force to effect a constant attendance at Prayers , when yet want of consideration may betray Men to Formality and undue Performance. There is a *Fear of God* (so his Worship of old was called ,) *which is taught by the Precepts of Men* ; and this is when Men go to Church meerly because the Magistrate Commands , or their Pa-

rents Bred them to it; or because it is the Custom of their Neighbours so to do: These shew themselves of a good ductile and sociable Temper, and are more to be esteemed than such as in despite of the Laws, and their good Education, and even in a pious Cohabitation, will contemn and scorn a daily attendance on Gods Worship: or than they who strain their wits to find faults in our Liturgy, and do all they can to create scruples in themselves and infuse them into others. But yet this is not enough for him that will be accepted of God or approved of Men as a Good Christian; for though these may be of a harmless and innocent Temper, yet they fall short of that Fervent Love to God and to our Blessed Saviour; and of that Divine Joy in the Hope of Glory to come, and of Fore-tasting the Blessedness we shall partake of in the Eternal World in the Communion of Saints, all which, as the Christian Religion is designed to work in us, so we are in this Service to excite and exercise. To these my earnest Exhortation is, That they will attend more diligently to those inward Preparations with which they should come to Worship God, and to those outward Expressions whereby he is Honoured before Men.

God

God will be Sanctified in all those that come nigh him, and before all the People he will be Glorified; and this he is onely by those who Worship him with a Holy Worship; and that both Internally and Externally: This we do not, except our minds be so disposed, our words and actions so ordered, as becomes the Glory of God's Essence, the Immensity of his Divine Perfections, and the Sense of our own Concernments, and of our Relation to those we are to pray with, and to pray for; and so as is suitable to the several Parts of Worship which we are to perform, as I have before observed, these dispositions cannot be attained but by serious and frequent Meditation. There is a Connexion in the Duties of Religion, which make it impossible to perform some as we ought, except we make Conscience of others that are preparatory thereunto; in this Connexion I suppose Meditation to be the first, and he that makes no Conscience of that, or knows not how to Perform it, will be hardly brought to a Good Performance in any other Duties, especially this of Prayer. Men may by a natural fluency of Speech, assisted with a quickness of Wit and ready Invention, easily pray to
good

good acceptance with Men: but as to our acceptance with God, and the effects of Prayer to our own Benefit and Consolation, it depends on the preparation of such Affections and Dispositions of Mind, as we can never have without the frequent use of Meditation.

Meditation in the most common sense of the word, is taken for more than bare thinking; it is a thinking of things, that we may have such knowledg; esteem, and affections toward them as we ought to have: And so great an Influence hath the End into the Efficacy of any Action, that I cannot expect that any Man should attain Devotion by thinking of things though never so Divine, except he designs his thoughts to that End: Students of several Sorts are engaged by other Motives to think of the same things that serve to this End, but without any Effect as to the suppressing their Sensual Desires, or lifting up their Minds to Heavenly things. The Reason is because their Minds by being so intently fixed on the love of Carnal Pleasures, do not discern even the things they look full upon, nor understand those very things they teach to others; and altho they are constrained to think how they
may

may talk or write of such things, yet they are with-held by these Sensual Affections from considering the Concern which themselves have therein.

There is no way therefore by meditating to attain Devotion, but by crucifying the Flesh, with all its Affections and Lusts, and awakening our dead and drouzie Souls to a faithful *endeavour* to live the *Life* for which they were made, and wherein alone they can be happy: And to this our Blessed Saviour hath given us such Assistance by the Grace of the Gospel, that no Man that will take hold of it can complain of infirmity; for although we never so much feel the weight and burden of earthly things which presseth down the Soul, as when we strive to ascend to God in the Exercises of True Devotion, yet if we fix our Minds on the Manifestation of God in the Flesh, shewing us how little these things are (how great soever they seem;) how little to be desired or feared, though seemingly dreadful or pleasant: And shewing us this, by his refusing all the Glories we so eagerly prosecute, and accepting the Sufferings we so fear and fly, in his own Person, and in Contemplation of the Heavenly Joys, of which he offereth us the
par-

participation, but on this condition, That we will receive his Spirit, and lead our Lives after the Pattern he hath set us; I say, if we would thus look unto Jesus (who was God manifest in our Flesh) we should soon find our selves able to lay aside these weights and all sinful affections, (how easie soever they beset us) and to ascend to our Blessed Saviour in Holy and Devout Affections, while we are employed in these Sacred Offices.

But it is not so much the want of ability, as of intencion, that is cause of the Decay of Devotion among Christians, and therefore to procure that I would represent the excellency of this Heavenly Affection.

Devotion it is a most Divine Spirit in Man, his greatest Exaltation above the Beasts and nearest Approach to Angels; 'tis (as *Herbert* saith of the Sabbath) the Fruit of this World and the Bloffom of the next (i. e.) the highest enjoyment of which we are capable here; and the fore-taste of what we shall most fully enjoy hereafter. It transforms the Soul into a Seraphim, burning with the Fervors of Divine Love, and carries it into Heaven (as *Elias* was in a Fiery Charror) to take its place

place in the Choir of Angels, and joyn in their Halalujahs and Adoration of him that sits on the Throne, and the Lamb that is at his Right Hand. Yet it carries us not above any of the Concerns wherein we may be useful to Men, but descends to the Consideration of all their wants and necessities, sorrows and miseries, and takes them into its Brest, and presents them before God with earnest requests for comfort and relief in behalf of them all, and it begets in men such a Divine Charity as reacheth to the uttermost of what may be done by us for the well-fare and happiness of our Neighbour. For while we not onely Adore God who is the Supream Benefactor, and our Saviour God-Man the Example of Self-denial and Meekness, (Vertues that Cure our Hurtful Lusts) and of such Love to Mankind as excited him to prosecute their Salvation and Felicity, with the shedding of his most Precious Blood; and would make us prefer the good of others before our own. I say, while this is the Object of our Adoration in these Excercises of Devotion, how can it be otherwise but that it must beget in us a Life and Temper most pleasant and profitable to Mankind? And indeed I have observed
that

that this *Heavenly Flame of True Devotion* is like that which descended on *Elias's Altar*, that licks up all our opposite Interests (as that did the Water) and make both our selves and all we have, a Sacrifice to the Honour of God and Good of Mankind : None therefore that considers the excellency of Devotion, but would set himself with great attention of Mind , to the consideration of such things as may render him a Devout Man.

The things that are of this nature are principally such as relate to God , to our Selves, or to Others that we are to pray for. We should think therefore upon God and our perfect dependance upon him, that he is worthy of all our Adorations and Praises , by reason of his Glorious and Infinite Perfections , his Wonderful Works and Innumerable Blessings and Mercies : That he and *he onely beareth Prayers*, and is nigh to all that call upon him , and pleased to be Invoked by us for the things which he is willing to give us : That he alone Orders and Disposeth all the Affairs of this World according to his Sovereign Will and Pleasure , Restrains or Enlarges the Power of Nature , Stops or Diverts the Course of it , Overrules Second Causes, Prospers or Disappoints Human

Human Undertakings, Gives and Takes away, Lifts up and Casts down how and whom he pleaseth.

We should think of our Dependance on him, That we Live, Move, and have our Being in him, and cannot Subsist a moment without him; that we are subject to innumerable casualties, which may destroy the strongest Body and healthfullest Constitution and such amazements and vexations as will soure the briskest Mind and shake the most fixed and composed Temper, and all these are under the Divine Government (besides his immediate Influxes to our Comfort or Affliction.) He that thinks how many things he wants, what woful things he is in danger of, of the manifold temptations, by allurements of sensual Objects, and suggestions of evil Spirits, and the weakness of his Graces and insufficiency of all things in Heaven or Earth besides God for his supply and succour: I say, he that thinks seriously of these things, will find he shall thereby have great help to his Devotion; he will find how much he is concerned to reconcile himself to God by humble and penitent Confessions, to seek his Grace and Favour by Fervent Supplications, to pray
for

for the Aid of his Spirit to help our infirmity, and assist our victory over our Spiritual Enemies; to give him thanks that we have not fallen into greater sins and miseries; to attend to his Holy Word, that thereby we may receive grace from him, and learn to please him and oblige his care and kindness for us, and such like things he will see, the knowledge thereof will beget and excite these Holy Affections in him.

It will be profitable also to this End, to think of our Obligation to our Christian Brethren, and Particular Regards we are to have to all Sorts and Degrees among them: For we Pray as Members of the Catholique Church; and must have a Concern for all, as Members of that one Spiritual Incorporation. But particularly we should often think what Affection we should bear to those, whether our Superiors, Equals, and Inferiors, with whom we are united as one Nation and National Church, and also should endeavour to represent to our selves what may be the several States and Conditions of those we are to joyn with, in the present performance of those Publick Duties; and such considerations will much help our Devotion: For the sense of the
sins

sins of others to whom we are united (as
 well as of our own) will help to make us
 humble and contrite in our Confessions,
 and of their wants and miseries as well as
 our own, will help to make us fervent
 in our Prayers and Supplications. Of the
 Mercies they all receive, as well as those
 we partake of, will help to make us joy-
 ful in God's Praises. Thus the general
 knowledge, that multitudes of Christians
 as well as our Selves, are concerned in the
 Matter of our Prayers, and that we have
 in particular, of the Concern of many
 of those we presently joyn with in these
 Holy Offices, will add much to our De-
 votion. It may be there are many things
 in the Publick Prayers that we have not at
 present such a particular Concernment in,
 but when we think that there are Millions
 of Christians of all Nations that have,
 who all are of the same Body with us un-
 der our Dear Saviour, the Head of it, and
 many of our own Country-men who are
 now all united with us as a Holy Nation
 and God's Peculiar People; and some of
 our Neighbours with whom we are one,
 as a Parochial Church, of whose Concern
 in those things we may have a particu-
 lar knowledge. I say, this will greatly
 assist

assist our Devotion in those very Particulars, and these Meditations will also increase that Charity, without which our Prayers as well as our Selves are counted but dead in the sight of God: And when we have wrought our Selves to this excellent Temper, our love to our Brethren will help our Devotion another way also. For it will make us endeavour, to render our selves as exemplary as we can possibly among them for a Devout Performance of these Holy Offices; and the more defective we do perceive their Devotion to be, the more shall we endeavour to Convince and Convert them by the perfection of our own. And there is certainly no better way; for many have I known whom reproof and disputation did but irritate, that by such Examples have been reformed.

Lastly, Frequent Reading these Holy Offices by our selves and serious Meditation thereon, would be a great help to our Devotion, especially if we have such Books as, *Dr. Comber's Excellent Labours on the several Offices of the Common Prayer*, to assist our Meditations; for when we have a full understanding of the great things contained in the brief comprehensive Sentences of the Lord's Prayer and
our

our Collects, the memory thereof, when we come to repeat them in this Solemn Office, will much assist our Devotion: And I am perswaded that if Men were but conversant in the study of the Common Prayer Book, they would find more Instruction in the Matter of their Duty to God and Man, and more Assistance in governing their Affections and Passions for preserving Peace in themselves, more support and consolation in troubles and afflictions, and more aid against temptations, &c. than in reading many Books, but especially it would be an excellent means to increase those Holy Affections which prepare us for Publick Prayers, and to assist our Devotion in the Performance.

I have mentioned this little of a great deal that might be said, of the Matter of our Meditation: but still it must be remembered, that these things be thought on with a purpose and intention to beget in us such *habitual Affections and Dispositions* as may make us fit to Pray always; and in the most wonted Expressions to exercise the most Devout Affections: and if we do so, we shall not need the Natural or Artificial Rethorick that must be in Prayers to affect those that want these dispositions,

ons, nor shall we be cloy'd with having allways the same; as some Dainty Stomachs with eating often the same Meats; for such Men carry in their Breast such a Pungent Sourse and Penitential Apprehension of their past Enormities, that it puts Life into their constant repeating our General Confession; and such a High Esteem of Gods Mercy in Christ, as gives them a Behaviour not ordinary in receiving Absolution; they have such Affection towards the Glory and Pleasure of Almighty God, and belief that he onely can give what we want, and forgive the sins, and prevent the temptations that would involve us in evil now in this world, & eternally in the next: that it gives a great Devotion to their saying the Lords Prayer; and so of all the rest of the Service.

And where men have such sense, methinks no man should deny that they pray in the Spirit or the Holy Ghost, as the Precepts of the Gospel require, That Pious Nonconformist Mr J. Corbet in his *Kingdom of God*, hath these words, *The Spirit of Prayer is never wanting, where the heart hath a due sense of the Matter: pag. 46. Although* (as he afterwards explains it,) *we use a stinted Form of Words.* Dr.

Owen

Owen I confess, in a late Discourse of Prayer, hath these words; "If Persons
 "are able in the reading any Book, meer-
 "ly of Human Composure, to rise up in
 "answer this Duty of Praying with all
 "manner of Prayer and Supplication in
 "the Spirit, or the exercise of the Aids
 "and Assistances received from him and
 "his Holy Acting in them as a Spirit of
 "Grace and Supplication, endeavouring,
 "labouring and watching thereunto; they
 "have attained what I cannot understand,
 That is in few words, the Doctor cannot understand how a Man that uses a Form, can be said to pray in the Spirit: It would be a high presumption in me to question the Understanding of so Great a Man; but he will not be angry if I question my own: for I cannot understand, if he that uses a Form cannot pray in the Spirit, why our Saviour, from whom we have these Precepts of Praying in the Spirit, should teach his Disciples a Form of Prayer. But it may be the Doctor will say (as he doth insinuate in many places of that Book,) that Christ gave those words onely for a Doctrinal and Directive Help to Prayer. (*i.e.*) To teach Men how to Pray *Ex tempore*; for which End (he saith) we may read

Forms of Prayer (how unlawful soever the use be, for which they were made.) But then I do not understand how the Doctor can say, pag. 234. *That it were better (it may be) that this were done:* Men taught to pray *ex tempore* in some other way, and these Doctrinal and Directive Helps not cast into the Form of a Prayer, which is apt to divert the Mind from its proper End and Use. Which words seem to me, to have such a reflection on our Blessed Saviour as is little short of blasphemy; (according to the Doctors Opinion of the Lords Prayer:) For if that were not intended for a Form, but for a *Doctrinal and Directive help to Prayer*; then those words applied to him, plainly say, *That it may be, Christ might have done better, than to have cast his Instructions and Directions about Prayer into the Form of a Prayer, which is apt to divert the Mind from its proper end and use:* which to say, is to reproach the Wisdom of God-incarnate, and to tell Our great Teacher sent from God, that he did not understand his Office, nor teach in the best manner, a thing of greatest concern to the Glory of God, and Happiness of Mankind (as the Doctor rightly saith, the well performance of

of Prayer is.) Words, which no Christian can patiently hear of his Saviour. Now according to my weak opinion, there is but one of these two ways for the Doctor to avoid this consequence from his words, either that he confess the truth and say, That our Saviour intended to teach his Disciples a Form of Prayer, and that it is (not onely Lawful) but a Positive Duty to use his Holy Prayer as we do.

Or if he will hold to his Opinion, viz. that it was not so intended, but meant onely to be a Doctrinal and Directive Help to teach them to Pray *Ex tempore*. Then he must prove that it is not *cast into the Form of a Prayer*. Now this later seems utterly impossible to be done, for since it so plainly appears to every Mans Sense and Reason that it is *cast into the Form of a Prayer*. And since the Christians of many Ages throughout the World, have esteemed and used it as a Form of Prayer. And since the Doctor himself (notwithstanding his Opinion that it was not so intended) cannot forbear in many places of his Book to call it *The Lords Prayer*. I say, since it is so, he will never make men believe it is not cast into the Form of a Prayer: Therefore I hope the Doctor on

second thoughts will retract his Book, and confess that there is a work of the Spirit in Prayer that he hath therein much opposed. A Work wherein he moved our Saviour and Holy Men to compose Forms of Prayer, and to teach their Disciples to say them, as the best help to Prayer. A Work whereby he moved and enabled our Reformers (as well as the Govenours of other Churches) to Compose and Prescribe a Liturgy for the Publick Service of God; whereby he excites in men a desire to approach to God in the Solemn Office of Prayer, both in their Closets and especially, in the Church (not thinking it enough to Pray occasionally (when they are pressed with the present sense of dangers, miseries, or wants,) as every Christian can do I confess, *Ex tempore*.) Whereby he teacheth Men thankfully to accept, and faithfully to use as Prayers, the Form our Saviour taught; and others taught and prescribed as before. Lastly, a Work whereby he teacheth and assists the preparations I before mentioned, that in the use of such Forms we may be truly devout and fervent: And if the Doctor would believe this I hope he would use no such insinuations to perswade that no Forms of Prayer

Prayer he ever hereafter made, nor those that are, used any otherwise than to help the attainment of the art of Praying *Ex tempore*: nor (while he professeth to oppose our Liturgy, as set up to exclude their Way of Praying, (endeavour by such insinuations to banish our Way out of the World (as the use of *Ex tempore* Prayer did once the Liturgy out of the Church:)) And I hope the Doctor will excuse this warmth which the conceit of such a design hath occasioned. But (to return) if our Saviour meant to teach a Form of Prayer, there can be no greater proof than that, That in the use of Forms we may best pray in the Spirit. For since by his Inspiration the precept of praying in the Spirit was given, the way of prayer he taught must be acknowledged best for the performing the same. This I hope, will put an end to the common way of appropriating the phrase of Praying in the Spirit to the use of *Ex tempore* Prayer; and give those that pray by Forms, and by our Liturgy, some share in the honour of it; and then I hope we shall hear no more scoffing at Praying by the Spirit (which this appropriation hath caused, however the Doctor complains of it) which I by no means approve.

But Lastly , when we have done our best in our preparations and performances, we must take heed that all be not intended to gain an Indulgence for living in any Sin, either of Omission or Commission.

The Enemies of our Church boast much of their good lives , and condemn us that are for the Common Prayer , as a profane sort of Men. I do heartily wish them as good as they think themselves , and that their goodness may consist as much in the Government of their Passions and Just Retributions , in Meekness , Humility and Candid Interpretations ; as in Abstinence from Sensuality and a seeming contempt of all Worldly Vanities : And I wish also that abundance of ours did not give just occasion for this their complaint ; and also that we may endeavour to Equal (yea Excel) them in Temperance and Heavenly Mindedness ; still adding to our Loyalty and Conformity , Sobriety and True Sanctity. But that I may add to my wishes , my faithful endeavours to persuade them to it , I shall offer Two Considerations to this purpose , 1. That of the Incongruity of a Vicious Life to an appearance of Devotion and daily Attendance on Divine Service : 2. Of the Unaccept-

cept,

ceptableness of all Acts of Pety without the Conjunction of a Holy Life.

I. The Incongruity is Evident to all Men. None that see a Man to bow very low when he comes into the Church, and to appear very devout by all outward signs, in the several Parts of Worship, but do expect that such a one should be very exact in the Course of his Life, and if they come to know that they are not, they will be very apt to take offence at it: I confess for my own part, it hath been so with me, and others have told me it hath been so with them, and reason tells me it must be so with all good men. The like I may say when we hear a man very devoutly own himself a sinner, and condemn himself of silliness in wandring from God's ways and following his own desires and devices (as in our General Confession) and then return home as proud and self-conceited as ever, and never the less inclin'd to wander from God in prosecution of self-satisfaction as before. To call God our Father at Church, as if we did partake of a Nature like his, inclin'd to all Righteousness, Goodness and Truth, and when we come home (by our ill nature and destructive practices) to shew our selves the
 Chil-

Children of the Devil. *Our Father in Heaven*: when neither the consideration of the Heavenly Original of our Souls, (Generated as it were at first by Divine Spiration,) nor of their Regeneration by the Spirit of God in the Work of our Redemption, can raise our Minds from this dung-hill earth, to seek the things above: Nor the Height and Excellency of Gods Glory, and his Advantage of seeing and punishing (expressed by his being in Heaven,) can move us to fear him. *To Pray that his Name may be Hallowed*; and then Profane it our selves (by using it in vain and light Interjections, or by Oaths and Execrations in our common talk) and causing it to be profaned by others through our vicious and scandalous Lives. *That his Kingdoms may come*; and yet rise in Rebellion against the Holy Government of his Spirit in our Hearts; and against the Disposals of his Providences, as to our outward Estate: And affronting his Ministers and discouraging them in the Administration of his Government by our crossness, frowardnes and disobedience (and such Ministers are all our Superiors, but chiefly Kings.) *That his Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*, when yet our obedience is so dull.

dull and heavy ; and as it were constrained, by necessity, and very unlike the Angels (who in doing the Will of God fly with all alacrity.) I may add the indecency of our grumbling if we are not as rich as our Neighbours, and our discontent at losses and crosses, though we have more than enough left ; when yet we pray but *for our Daily Bread* : Of our implacableness and irreconcilableness towards those that offend us, when we pray to be forgiven no otherwise than as we forgive: and lastly that when we pray *that God will not lead us into temptations*, that we should so heedlessly or presumptuously run into them, that without a Miracle God himself cannot deliver us from evil (and that when we may be sure he will work no Miracles in favour of such as offer themselves a prey to Sathan by running out of his Protection, and neglecting the means of their own Preservation.)

I hint these things on the beginning of our Service, that we may see the incongruity of a wicked life with the whole.

2dly. The unacceptableness of all expressions of devotion, from men of such vicious and profane lives. *The sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord,*

'tis

'tis the prayer of the righteous that is his delight. Unto the wicked saith God, What hast thou to do to take my Name into thy mouth, since thou hatest to be Reformed, and casteth my words behind thee? The most Solemn Assemblies of such men for his Worship and Service is a burden to him; *Esa. 1.* the reason is, because his infinite veracity makes him to hate their hypocrisy, his just resentments of their bold breaking his Laws (when the Devil and their Brutish Lusts tempts them) makes his Displeasure to arise at their fawnings when the temptation is over. To give real worship to Satan by doing his lusts, and living to the Flesh, and fullfilling its desires, and then to make these outward appearances of great devotion towards God, makes his Jealousies burn like that of an abused Husband, when his Wife fawns on him after her Adulterous Embraces. 'Tis our Hearts that are Gods Peculiar, and if we suffer any thing to ravish or defile them, *the sacrifices of our lips will not be accepted.*

But now how excellently doth Holiness and Righteousness sure together? and how graciously doth God accept such in whom they are conjoyned? To see a Man that makes acknowledgment of a most Glorious

rious and Tremendous Deity by Solemn Acts of Worship in the Morning; *Walking in the Fear of God all the Day long.* To see a Man after he hath Celebrated Gods Glorious Perfections (Wisdom, Goodness, Truth, Faithfulness, Patience, Long-suffering and Forgiveness &c.) in the Solemn Office of Thanksgiving, striving to imitate them in the Course of his Life. To see a Man after the Cup of Blessing received at the hands of Gods Ministers with great Devotion, to declare by his Conversation, that he hath thereby been made to drink into the same Spirit with his Saviour: when he is Lowly, Meek, and Patient, Loving, and Diligent in doing others good (little regarding the things below, and so earnestly intending the joys above) as Christ was: I say, to see this is most lovely, because these things so excellently agree. And such are most acceptable in their approaches to God, he is well pleased with their Adorations and Praises, delights to hear their prayers, and will shew such tokens for their Good, *that they may always see to their joy, and their enemies oft to their shame.* And I am persuaded if the People of this Church will joyn these Two Things in their constant Practice, God will so Bless us, that all the Ends of the Earth shall Fear him; (*i.e.*) be allured by the Flourishing Glory of our Church and State, to Imitate the Excellent Order of our Divine Service.

And if they would but consider what good effects it would have (to the healing our Breaches and restoring us to Love and Unity among our selves, making us a Joy to our Friends, and a Terror to our Enemies abroad, and preventing the miseries we lately felt and presently fear at home) and will not suffer themselves to be blinded by passion and prejudice, and ill arts of discontented men; I say, they could

could not chuse but put their helping hand to effect the conjunction.

I Conclude therefore, with my Earnest Prayer to Almighty God for the good Success of this Book, (to perswade Men to such Decent Performance of these Holy Offices, and Exemplary Piety in all their Converses) that by his Blessing (notwithstanding all its defects and imperfections) it may attain its End; and to this Prayer I hope all Good Men will say, *Amen.*

F I N I S.

Daily Prayers in and about the CITY.

	Mor.	E.		M.	E.
At the Kings Cha.			St. Martins Chu.	6	5
Dukes Chappel —			Tabernacle	9	3
Westminst. abbey	6, 10	4	St. P. Covent Gar.	10	3
Ely House —			St. Mart. Ludgate	9	3
Temple —			Sr. Dion. Back Ch.	8	5
Lincolns Inne —	8	4	St. Andr. Und.		
Greys Inne —			Old Fish street		6
St. Jam. Clerkenwell	10		St. An. kolins		
Charter House —	11	4	Sepulchres —		
St. Christophers —	6	6	St. Mary Welneth	11	

At St Mary All lermanbury at 11 Morn. and 5 E-
ven. Being given by a pious person for one year,
with promise of settling it for ever, if it be attend-
ed by any considerable number in that time. 'Tis
a thousand pities future Generations should be hin-
dered of such a Benefit by the indevotion of this.

